



CLEAN YOUR PC
THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO
REINSTALLING WINDOWS



FREE TO PLAY
THE BEST FREE WINDOWS
GAMES TO TRY TODAY!

NEW SECTION!
**WELCOME TO
WINDOWS 10**



Windows

Help & Advice

100 WAYS TO IMPROVE WINDOWS 10

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ways to do everything!

- ✓ Customise your Start menu
- ✓ Use keyboard shortcuts
- ✓ Edit and share photos
- ✓ Use virtual desktops

BEGINNERS' GUIDE

Set up Edge, the brand
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NEW
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Nov 2015

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Welcome

Windows 10 may be the easiest version of Windows to use so far, but that doesn't mean it lacks power. Underneath its simple surface, it's teeming with hidden settings that are waiting to be discovered in all sorts of places – on the task bar, in the Start menu, or in the Control Panel, (which is still there, hidden under the surface, even though Microsoft has created a new Settings app).

This issue we're aiming to show you where all these hidden

settings are lurking, so you can improve the way you use Windows 10. You'll find lots of valuable tips in our big feature, starting on page 12.

Of course, using a PC shouldn't always be just about getting stuff done. It's also about having fun, and to that end we've tracked down 20 of the best free games you can play right now on your PC, on page 68. Just use the download link we give for each one to start playing today!



Graham Barlow Editor-in-Chief
www.facebook.com/windowsmag



**SUBSCRIBE TO THE MAG TODAY
AND SAVE – JUST TURN TO PAGE 32!**

We pride ourselves in being the only magazine on the shelves to show you exactly how to get the very best from the Windows operating system, whether you're using Windows 10 or Windows 8.1. Also, don't forget to take a look at how you can read the magazine on your laptop, phone or tablet.



Don't miss our **NEXT ISSUE**, when we share...

- Turn Windows 10 into a media centre – master playing video on your home PC
- The 32 best free Windows 10 apps → Customise Windows 10 for ease of use

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Windows

Help & Advice

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EXPLORE

The best PC tutorials



Your guide *Graham Barlow* says...

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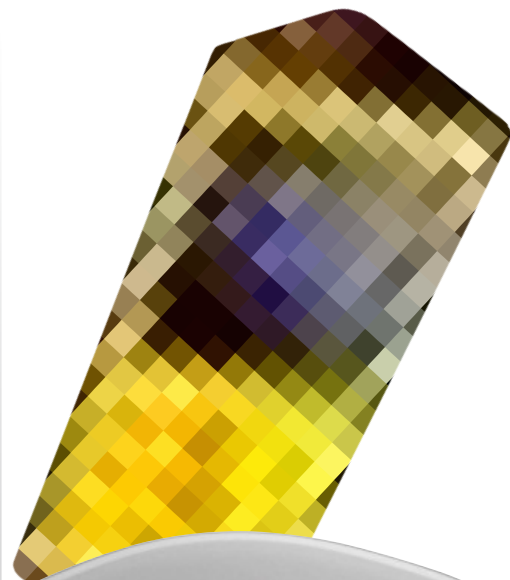
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NEW SECTION

Welcome to...

WINDOWS 10

91 Your Windows 10 journey starts here!



Discover

► NEW THINGS TO DO ► AMAZING WEBSITES ► FASCINATING FACTS



NO TICKET Look in the right places and you can have a free movie night every night

The little screen

How to watch free films online via your PC

As Paramount Pictures puts some of its back catalogue online, we look at legit ways to find free films for nowt

Paramount Pictures – the studio behind blockbusters such as *Mission Impossible*, *Star Trek* and *Indiana Jones* – has completed its own impossible mission and made over 100 of its movies available via YouTube. It's a controversial move, but the studio has obviously done its maths and figured out it can make as much money from adverts as it would from DVD sales.

Alas, at the time of writing, the films aren't available in the UK, presumably due to territorial rights issues. However, there are other ways to enjoy free movies, and YouTube is a great place to start.

While you can find many films by searching the video service, these tend to be unofficial uploads with varying quality. It's better to head to <http://bit.ly/youtubvid> for movies legally uploaded to the site. Admittedly quality may vary here, but there are some illuminating documentaries available – such as *Life in a Day* and *First Orbit*.

Online movie-making is getting really exciting thanks to crowdfunding

In the UK we may not have access to Paramount's back catalogue – but we do have one of the most awesome broadcasters on the planet in the form of the BBC. Its iPlayer service includes movies recently broadcast on terrestrial channels (www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/categories/films/highlights). At the time of writing, Ryan Gosling's *Drive* and thriller *The Disappearance of Alice Creed* are available on the service, as well as

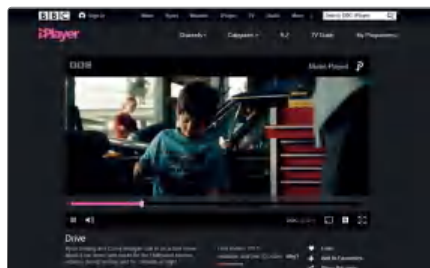
a host of BBC4's engrossing documentaries.

Where online movie-making is getting really exciting

is in crowdfunding sites such as Kickstarter. Earlier this year Swedish filmmaker David Sandberg released his 30-minute short *Kung Fury* via YouTube for free. It's a hilarious, violent and hilariously violent homage to 80s action movies. You can catch the whole 30-minute film on www.kungfury.com, and see upcoming Kickstarter movies at <http://bit.ly/upcomfilm>.

USE IPLAYER OFFLINE Watch the BBC anywhere

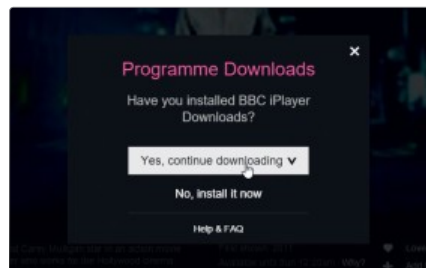
BBC's iPlayer is a fantastic way to catch up on films which have been shown on the channel. But there's a hidden feature on the service – the ability to download videos and TV programs to your computer to watch offline. This means you can potentially take your laptop just about anywhere and watch anything – provided it's within 30 days of first broadcast. To get started visit www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/ install on your Windows computer.



TV TIMES ...and go to www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer, then browse to the program you'd like to download



DOWNLOAD Click 'For Windows' then download and run the software. Now open your browser...



TAPED Click 'Download'. If asked, choose 'Launch'. Your program will download to your computer

The Knowledge...



Steam Controller

At last – a smart clothes iron!

Alas, the Steam in question here is Valve's gaming distribution service and platform. And the controller is a device which you can plug into your PC and use to play games. It's all part of Valve's attempt to get Steam away from desktops and into people's living rooms.

I already have an Xbox 360 pad for that. Why do I need this?

Console-style controllers are great for playing console style games on the PC, but they're not so hot when it comes to real time strategy and role-playing games, which are usually played with a mouse and keyboard. The Steam Controller aims to solve that.

How will it do that?

A typical controller includes a pair of sticks, but the Steam Controller replaces these with laptop-style trackpads. These work with haptic feedback (vibrations) to give you the feeling and precision of a mouse in a compact, wireless device. It also includes motion sensors so you can tilt it to steer in racing games.

It sounds fair dinkum. But how well does it actually work?

Early reports are mixed, in truth. Some reviewers say they love the idea, but others literally can't get to grips with its weird shape. Controllers have been an essential part of the console gaming experience for almost 30 years, and Valve is completely new to this, so it might take a couple of iterations before they get it completely right.

Hmm, interesting. Well how much is it, and when can I get one?

The controllers are out now in GAME stores and online via <http://store.steampowered.com/app/353370>. They cost £39.99, which is about the same as a wireless Xbox 360 pad for the PC.

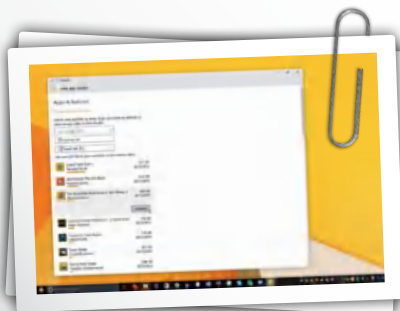


HENRY WINCHESTER
TECH EXPERT

Windows 10

Find out which apps are taking up the most room

Finding hard-drive hogging programs on previous versions of Windows has always been a bit of a nightmare, particularly if you're running a small solid state hard drive. Windows 10's storage manager makes tracking down overweight apps a lot easier. Click the Windows icon, then choose 'Settings'. From here, choose 'Storage', followed by the relevant hard drive. You'll see a lot is taken up by Windows under 'System and reserved', but clicking on 'Apps and features' drills down to the most voluminous programs. Clicking on one lets you instantly uninstall it, freeing up precious space.



WINDOWS INSIDER

EXPOSING YOUR PC'S SECRETS



Windows 8

Kinectimals Unleashed

Microsoft's Kinectimals game was initially developed for the Xbox 360's Kinect accessory, but it's since grown into its own franchise – and you can download the Windows version for free. Search the store for Kinectimals Unleashed and you'll be able to play with cute and cuddly virtual animals. It works a little like the Tamagotchi toys of yore, with your pets requiring attention and love. There are 85 animals to choose from, including baby tigers, bear cubs and 15 cute puppies. It's fun and family friendly, and it becomes surprisingly rewarding if you play it for long enough.

Ninite

There's nothing quite like a fresh installation of Windows, whether it's on a brand new PC, or if you're just refreshing your ageing one with a reinstallation. But tracking down and installing all your favourite programs can quickly turn pleased wows into frustrated groans. Fortunately, Ninite (www.ninite.com) is on hand. This simple site lists lots of free popular programs – such as Google Chrome, AVG, Skype and VLC – and then sticks them all in a custom installer. It's beautiful in its simplicity, and we estimate that it's saved us at least a million man-hours of watching installation bars slowly fill up.



Struggling to get something to work? Need a tip?

Then email us your woes (to windowsmagazine@futurenet.com with the subject line 'Windows Insider') and we'll share your perfect Windows tweaks in a future issue.

Tip of the month

Keep the noise down

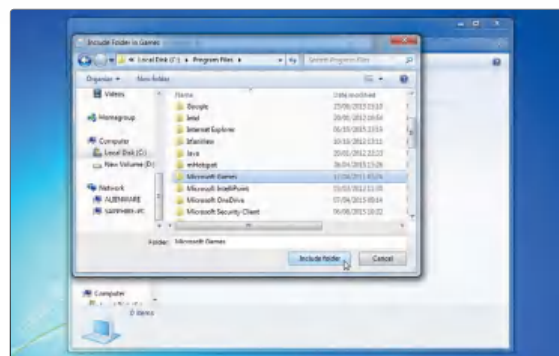
Make the most of libraries

Windows 7

Access all your favourite files quickly and easily with this oft-overlooked Windows 7 feature

Windows' libraries are a fantastic way to keep lots of files at your fingertips – even if they're stored in different folders or drives. The operating system includes libraries for Documents, Music, Pictures and Videos, and files found here can be sorted by date or filename. It's easy to add new places to existing libraries, too – simply right-click on the relevant folder icon, then choose 'Include in library' and

choose the library. You can even create a new library for, say, games, or photos of a particular person or thing. Click the Start button, then click on your name in the Start menu. In the left panel choose 'Libraries,' then click, 'New library'. Now click the new icon and choose 'Include a folder' and browse to the folder you'd like to include. Keep adding folders to build your new library.



ADD LIBRARIES Libraries are a great way of organising and viewing all your PC's files quickly and simply

Surface tension

Microsoft makes a PC

The tech giant finally leaps into the world of computing with the launch of its Surface Book laptop

Microsoft is about to do something unheard of – manufacture a PC. The Surface Book is a two-in-one device powered by state-of-the-art components and Windows 10. But is it too little, too late for Microsoft?

The company has always had a hand in the world of hardware. Its first physical product, released in 1982, was a mouse to use with Word for DOS. From here Microsoft has branched out into other accessories, such as keyboards, game controllers and webcams. It successfully moved into console gaming in 2001 with the release of the Xbox, and entered the tablet market in 2012 with its Surface devices.

The Surface Book continues the evolution of these Surface tablets. It includes a detachable keyboard and a 13.5-inch touchscreen, so you can switch between using it as a laptop and a tablet. What differentiates the Book from other Surface devices is the choice of high-end components – the Book's Intel Core i5 or i7 processor, 16GB of memory and optional dedicated graphics chip elevate it to the same league as high-end

laptops from companies such as Dell, Lenovo and even Apple.

But Microsoft might have an uphill struggle on its hands. Five years ago a high-end laptop would have turned heads and generated profits. Now PCs are part of a flooded market, with Google's cheap Chromebooks proving versatile, and Valve's Steam Machines demonstrating you don't need Windows to play games on a computer.

Cost analysis

There's also the price. The most basic Surface Book will set you back \$1,499 (£970), but crank up the components to their highest level and you can expect to spend an eye-watering \$3,199 (£2,070). It's

almost identical to Apple's pricing of its MacBook Pro premium laptops.

Microsoft's branding still counts for a lot, and we've always found the company's hardware hardy and well-designed. If you're in the market for a new premium laptop you could do far worse than the Surface Book – and it could just be the shot in the arm Microsoft needs.



Download this...



Techradar How To

techradar.com/how-to

Techradar.com – which is made by the same people as this very magazine – has become a hugely successful website about all things tech, carrying news, opinions and reviews of the latest hardware. It's just got a little bit better, too, thanks to its How to subsection.

This collection of tips and tricks for all things tech currently includes advice on how to get more from Windows 10, tidy up your iPhone's home screens, take stunning photos of wildlife, speed up your PC, and use virtual desktops and overclock your computer's memory. It also includes more humorous articles, such as how to live as if you're in *Back to the Future's* 2015 – as it was imagined from the 1989 film. If you want to get more from your tech it's worth bookmarking and visiting regularly, and it's suitable for everyone from technological beginners to computing professionals.



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THE 60-SECOND QUIZ

Pens at the ready, your time starts now!

1 Games company Valve is moving into hardware – but what was its first game?

- A. Halo
- B. Doom
- C. Half-Life

2 Which tech company is pinning its hopes on a Priv smartphone?

- A. HTC
- B. Yahoo!
- C. BlackBerry

3 What is the name of the current CEO of Microsoft?

- A. Satya Nadella
- B. Steve Jobs
- C. Robert De Niro

4 Which supermarket is the one behind the creation of budget tablet Hudl?

- A. Sainsbury's
- B. Lidl
- C. Tesco

5 In which city are Facebook and Google's European headquarters located?

- A. Dublin
- B. London
- C. Bristol

6 What is the name of Google's new umbrella company?

- A. Umbrella
- B. The Googlest
- C. Alphabet

Answers 1C, 2C, 3A, 4C, 5A, 6C.

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE

December

18

Friday

Facts & figures

Henry Winchester reveals a host of fascinating digital facts

NINE MILLION...

Gamers took part in the beta test for EA's *Star Wars: Battlefront*. The shooter is set in the popular film franchise's universe, and it invites players to step into the shoes of the heroic rebels or the evil empire. The snowy landscape of Hoth, from *The Empire Strikes Back*, formed the backdrop for the beta test, a period which is used to iron out wrinkles and gauge the game's reception. Early reports are good – the force may be strong in this one.

COULD YOU GO A DAY WITHOUT THE INTERNET?

If the very idea sends shivers down your spine you're not alone – 36 per cent of Britons surveyed by Vodafone said they'd be unable to go for 24 hours without a connection to the world wide web. And 69 per cent of those surveyed cited boredom as the main reason for their internet addiction. Londoners were least likely to try going cold turkey for a day, while the east of England was the most up for it.

WHAT IS XG.FAST?

While it may sound like SlimFast for gamers, XG.fast is BT's experimental superfast broadband technology. It promises blazing speeds of up to 5.6Gbps, but the crucial part of the new tech is that it can use existing copper telephone lines, so there's no need for BT to take the costly steps of upgrading its infrastructure to fibre optic cables. At the moment it can only achieve the ultrafast speeds over runs of less than 100 metres, but BT is working on it.

TEN SECONDS

The amount of time it took hacker Axelle Apvrille to access a Fitbit activity tracker, at Budapest's Hacktivity conference. The tracker uses Bluetooth, making it vulnerable to ne'er-do-wellers. Apvrille increased the victim's activity stats via the backdoor, meaning it's potentially the first virus to cause people to gain weight.

HOW PREVALENT IS SMART TECHNOLOGY IN US HOMES?

- 17%** ROCK OUT WITH WIRELESS SPEAKERS
- 11%** SNUGGLE UP WITH A SMART THERMOSTAT
- 9%** FEEL SAFER WITH HOME SECURITY SYSTEMS
- 8%** LET ROBOTS DO THEIR CLEANING AND MOWING
- 6%** ARE ILLUMINATED BY SMART LIGHTING SYSTEMS

Source: Forbes/Statista/The Harris Poll

WHAT ARE THE MOST PHOTOGRAPHED THINGS ON GOOGLE PHOTOS?

Google's photo storage service welcomed its 100 millionth user and celebrated with a peek behind the scenes. Weddings are the most photographed events, followed by concerts and Christmas. Dogs are the most snapped animals. The most photographed places are Paris, New York and Barcelona.

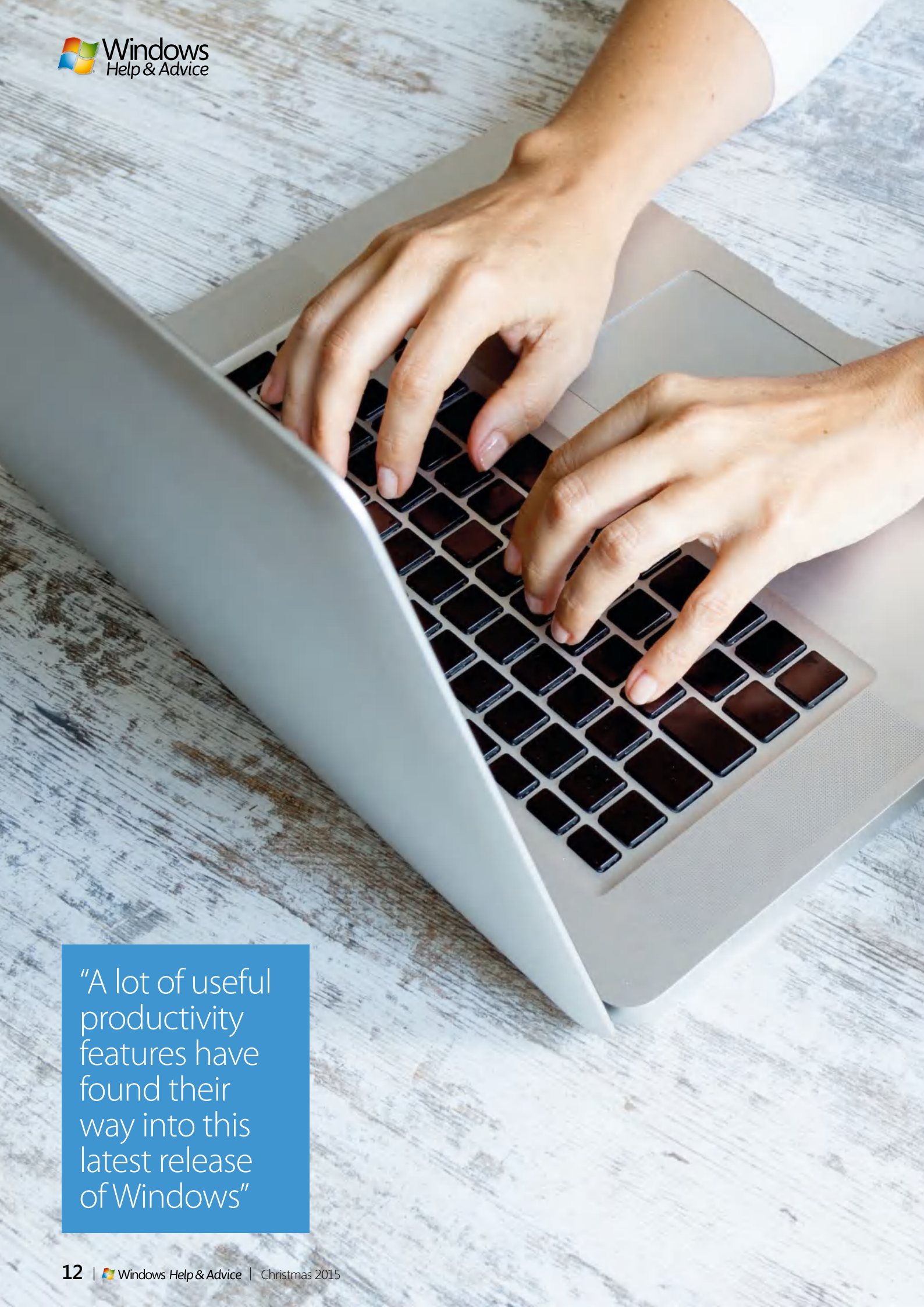
TOP TUMBLR FACTS

- t** The blogging site was launched in 2007 by David Karp and Marco Arment.
- t** Its name is an abbreviation of 'tumblelogs' – short-form blogs which can include images, videos and links.
- t** Tumblr drew inspiration from two existing tumblelogs – Anarchaia and Projectionist – combining ideas from both in a simple and easy-to-use platform.
- t** Within two weeks of launch the site had some 75,000 users.
- t** In June 2012, paid advertising was launched on Tumblr, in conjunction with an Adidas campaign – a significant step.
- t** Internet portal Yahoo! bought Tumblr for \$1.1 billion, netting Karp \$250 million.
- t** ...but some users were unhappy with the deal. A petition against the purchase attracted over 170,000 signatures.
- t** Regardless of the purchase, Tumblr snowballed and it now has 122.4 billion posts across 259.9 million blogs.
- t** And 14 per cent of 18-29 year olds in the US have a Tumblr account.
- t** The most popular blog on the whole of Tumblr is mcupdate.tumblr.com, which details *Minecraft's* latest updates.

Sources: wikipedia.org, buzzfeed.com, tumblr.com, dailymail.com

WHICH AREAS OF THE UK HAVE THE BEST BASIC DIGITAL SKILLSETS?

According to charity Go ON UK, people living in Greater London have the best IT skills – 84 per cent of residents in the Big Smoke know their way around the internet and computers. Hot on London's heels are Scotland, East Anglia and the South East, where 81 per cent of the population are tech savvy. Broadband-deprived Wales is the worst place for IT in the UK – just 62% are said to feel confident when it comes to computers.



"A lot of useful productivity features have found their way into this latest release of Windows"

100


WINDOWS 10 PRODUCTIVITY HINTS & TIPS

Mayank Sharma shares tips to help you make effective use of the new features in Windows 10

Windows 10 is brimming with new and updated features for streamlining all your computing tasks. The new release combines the familiarity of Windows 7 with the functionality of Windows 8. It includes all the features you have become accustomed to, but adds an extra sprinkling of customisability, such as the new tile-based Start menu. Furthermore,

plenty of new productivity-enhancing features have found their way into this release. This is the first version of Windows that allows you to divide apps and windows between multiple virtual desktops, for instance. It also sports a new quadrant snapping function that allows you to snap up to four windows on a screen for enhanced productivity.

While you can use some features to increase your productivity intuitively, others require a visit to the menus

and settings before they can make your life easier. In this feature, we'll take you through Windows' nooks and crannies and help you tweak your Windows installation to suit your style of working. Using the tips, you'll be able to shave time off tasks that need to be performed regularly and streamline your navigation around the system. We'll also share tips to help tweak the new features based on your preferences. Let's get started! 



A BETTER DESKTOP

1 SCROLL INACTIVE WINDOWS

If you often work with multiple open windows, then Windows 10 enables you to save time by giving you the option to scroll through inactive windows in the background when you hover over them.

2 SNAP WINDOWS TO CORNER

Windows 10 includes a Snap Assist feature that lets you snap two windows side-by-side - just drag an open window off screen and you are offered a choice of running apps to snap next to it. Also, to snap a window to a quarter size of the monitor, just drag the window to a corner.

3 ARRANGE WINDOWS TO SUIT THE WAY YOU WORK

In addition to Snap, you can arrange windows in other ways as well. Right-click on the taskbar to reveal three window arrangement schemes: namely, Cascade Windows, Show windows stacked, and Show windows side by side.

4 TRY OUT THE NEW SNAP KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

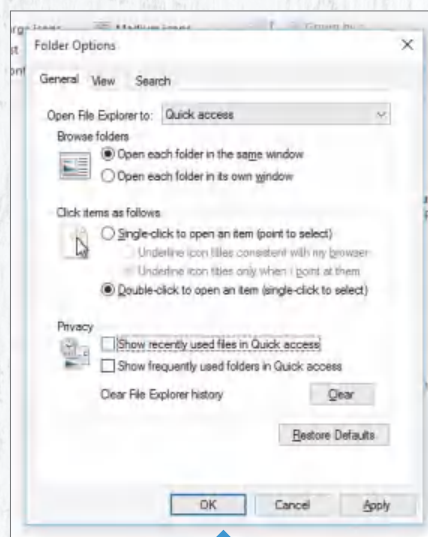
Use the keyboard to save time and snap windows without touching your mouse. Use the [Win] key with the arrow key to snap an app to one of the four corners of the screen and double-up commands to reach the quadrants. For example, pressing [Win] with the right arrow, then [Win] with the up arrow places the current window in the top-right corner.

5 USE VIRTUAL DESKTOPS

Windows 10 lets you add multiple virtual desktops. For this, click the Task View button on the taskbar and then click on the New desktop button. See Tip 11 if you want to hide the Task View button.

6 PEEK AT THE DESKTOP

Right-click on the thin button at the far right of the taskbar (it's after the date and doesn't look like a button) and choose 'Peek at desktop'. Now, when you roll the pointer over it, it'll show you a quick preview of the desktop.

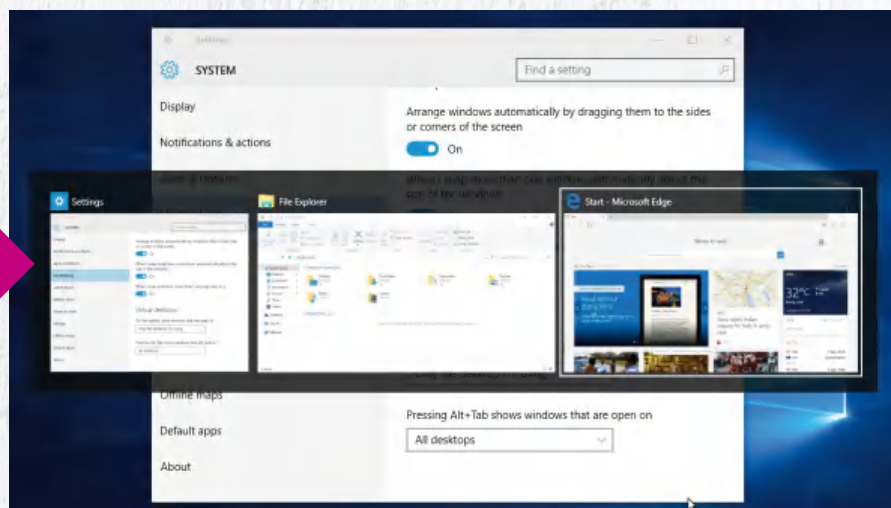


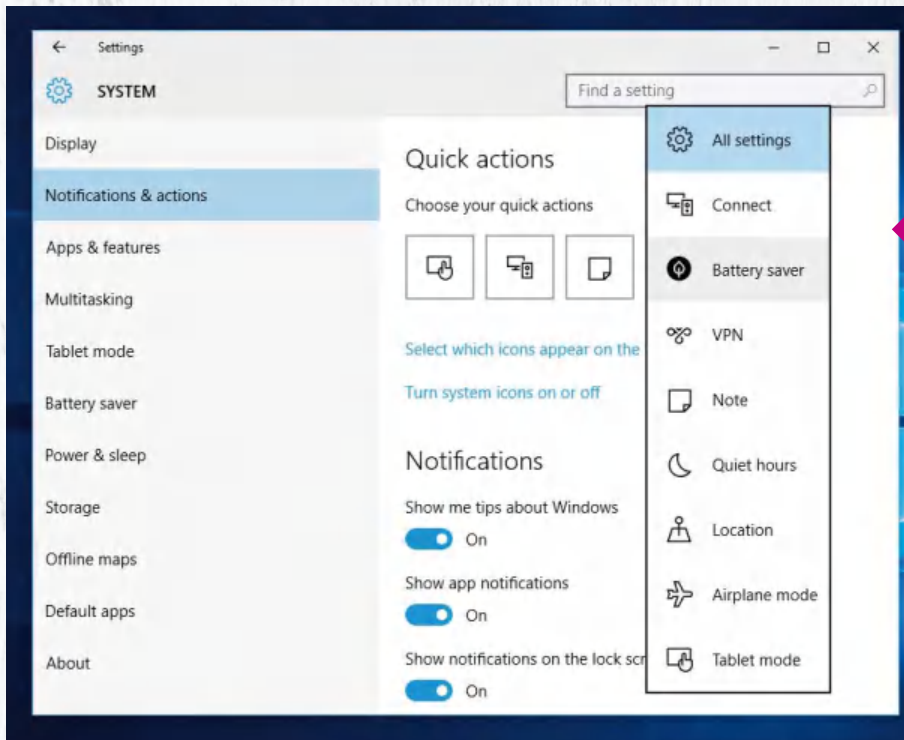
7 Customise Quick Access

Quick Access allows you to immediately jump into your favourite folder and most recently used files. To customise its contents, switch to the View tab in Explorer and hit 'Options'. Note that at the bottom of the General tab are further options to show/hide certain bits of information.

8 View apps from across desktops

By default the taskbar displays windows and apps from the current desktop. To change this behaviour, head to 'Start > Settings > System > Multi-tasking > Virtual Desktops' and select the 'All desktops' option from the pull-down menu.





16 Manage notifications

To customise which quick action icons are displayed in the Notification Center, head to 'Start > Settings > System > Notifications & actions' and then click on the four icons displayed to select a different icon from a pull-down list.

9 MOVE BETWEEN VIRTUAL DESKTOPS

To move windows between virtual desktops, bring up the Task View and drag an open window from the current desktop straight into the one you want to move it into. Alternatively, drag a window to the 'new desktop' button to create a new virtual desktop.

10 GET BACK ICONS ON THE DESKTOP

For easier access to certain key locations on your computer, head to 'Start > Settings > Personalisation > Themes'. Next, click the 'Desktop icon Settings' and select the icons you want to place on the desktop.

11 HIDE THE TASK VIEW BUTTON

If you don't use virtual desktops, or use the keyboard to switch between them, you can banish the Task View icon by right-clicking on the taskbar and deselecting the 'Show Task View button' option.

12 REMOVE CORTANA'S SEARCH BOX

Similarly, you can reduce the space taken by Cortana in the taskbar, if you don't use it much. Right-click on an empty part of the taskbar, select Cortana and choose 'Hidden' to change it to a pop-up. Keep Cortana on the taskbar as an icon by choosing 'Show Cortana icon'.

13 PIN AND REORDER YOUR FOLDERS

You can also pin folders in File Explorer's Quick Access list to make sure they don't disappear regardless of their frequent or recent use. To change their listing order,

simply select a folder and drag it above or below the other listed folders.

14 CHANGE THE DEFAULT VIEW IN FILE EXPLORER

File Explorer now defaults to the Quick Access view, but if you want it to go straight to, say, This PC, on launch, click on the View tab, select Options and change the 'Open File Explorer to' setting to 'This PC'.

15 MAKE WINDOWS TOUCH-FRIENDLY

If your computer has a touchscreen you can manually enable Windows 10's touch-friendly interface to operate Windows in a tablet mode. Head to 'Start > Settings > System > Tablet Mode' to manually alter its behaviour.

17 SWIPE MENU

All your apps run full-screen when you're using Windows in Tablet mode.

20 Mount ISO images

You don't need any third-party software to browse the contents of an ISO image. Right-click on an ISO image and click 'Mount'. The ISO images are auto-mounted as virtual discs and you can then access them from the File Explorer.

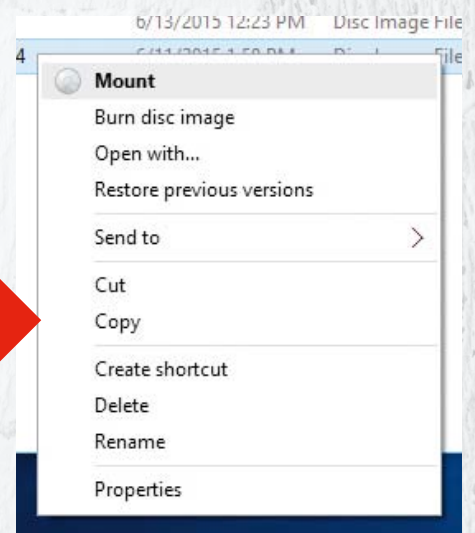
To bring up the menu and access any commands and the window control, simply swipe in from the top.

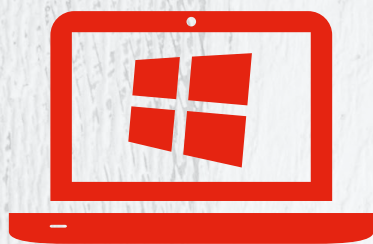
18 USE CUSTOM INSTALL

When you're setting up Windows 10 on a new PC, make sure you select the Custom install option instead of the default Express install. It's more involved but lets you modify important aspects of your installation, such as the privacy settings.

19 SHAKE TO MINIMISE

To declutter your screen you can quickly minimise all open windows except the one you're currently viewing. Just click, hold and shake its title bar. Repeat the action to restore all minimised windows.





GET GOING WITH THE START MENU

21 ENABLE JUMPLISTS

You can save a considerable amount of time by using Jump Lists with your most-used apps. Open Settings from the Start Menu and go to 'Personalisation > Start' and select the last option to see jump lists on your Start Menu and Taskbar.

22 KEYBOARD-FRIENDLY START

You can operate the Start menu almost entirely using the keyboard. Hit the Windows key to bring it up and then use the search feature and arrow keys to navigate it without a mouse.

23 COLOURISE START

The default colour of the Start Menu doesn't please everyone. To pick your own colour, head to 'Start > Settings > Personalisation > Colours' and disable the 'Automatically pick an accent colour from my background' option. You can then pick an accent colour from the palette.

24 STREAMLINE START

If you don't want the Start menu to show the most-used programs in the upper left-hand side, open the Settings app from the Start Menu and head to 'Personalisation > Start'. Set the 'Show most used apps' option to 'Off'.

25 HIDE RECENTLY OPENED APPS

If you don't want the Start Menu to show your recently opened programs and files, head to 'Settings > Personalisation > Start' and toggle the 'Show recently added apps' option to 'Off'.

27 STOP AN APP APPEARING IN 'RECENTLY USED' LIST

You can also prevent particular apps from showing up in the recently used apps list (despite how frequently you use it) without turning off the feature entirely. To do this right-click on an app and select 'Don't show in this list'.

28 TURN OFF LIVE TILES

If you're distracted by the constant updates and changes in the tiles, you can turn off their ability to display updates. Just right-click on them and select the 'Turn live tile off' option.

29 SWITCH TO START SCREEN

If you wish to pin more items to the Start menu you can actually make it stretch across the entire screen. Head to 'Start > Settings > Personalisation > Start' and toggle the 'Use full-screen Start when in the desktop' option.

30 PIN MOST USED SETTINGS

You can pin shortcuts, files and folders to Start Menu. Just right-click on a chosen item and select the 'Pin to Start' option. This will immediately pin the item to the right-side of the Start menu.

31 ALTER NAMES AND ICONS OF THE TILES

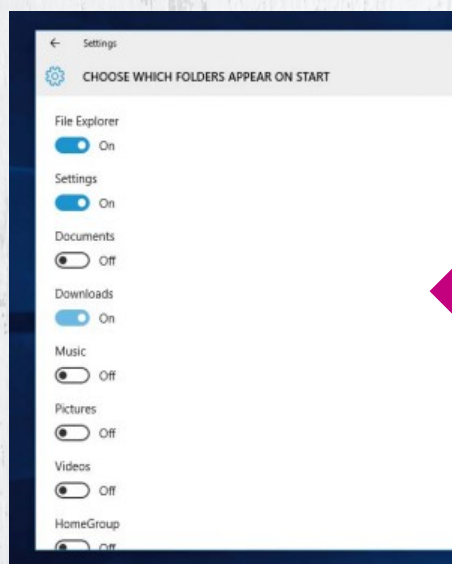
Right-click on a tile of a non-Modern app and select the 'Open file location' option. This will open the Programs folder. Press [F2] to rename the shortcut. To change its icon, right-click on the shortcut and head to 'Properties > Change Icon'.

31 REMOVE TILES

On the other hand, if you have no use for the tiles on the Start menu you can remove every one of them by right-clicking on each and selecting the 'Unpin from Start' option.

33 RESIZE THE START MENU

To make room for your customisations, you can easily resize the Start menu to your liking. Just move your mouse pointer to the top-border or right-border of the Start Menu, the pointer will change into arrows and you'll be able to increase or decrease height and width.

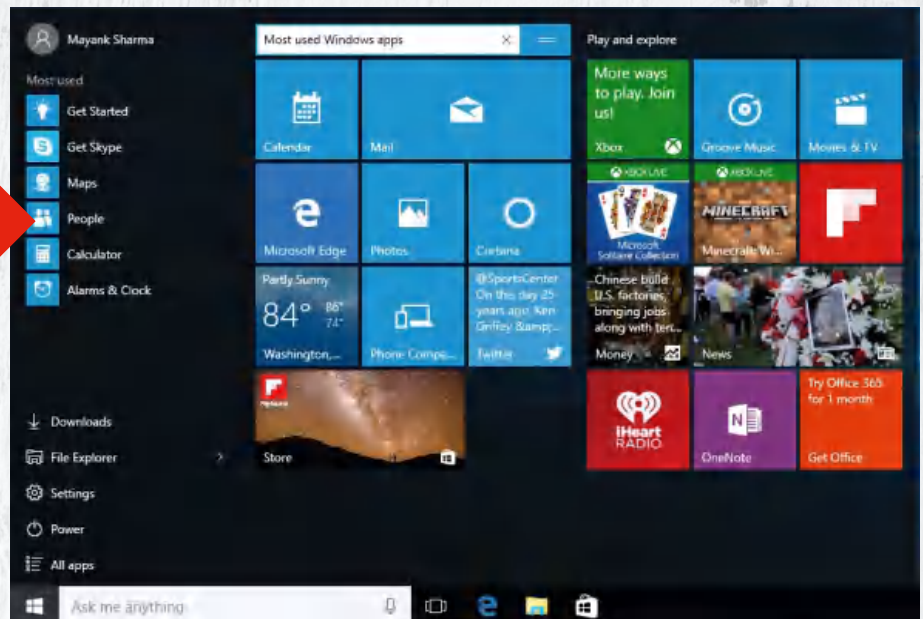


26 Choose your folders

Open the Settings app from Start Menu and go to 'Personalisation > Start' and click on the 'Choose which folders appear on Start' link. Now you can customise the folders list that shows on the Start menu.

38 Label and group tiles

By default, the Start menu arranges tiles inside two groups. Click on these labels to rename them. If you've pinned tiles of your own, hover over the area above them and click on the two parallel lines to name the group.



34 UNINSTALL APPS FROM THE START MENU

You can right-click on any Modern or traditional desktop app in the Start menu and then select the 'Uninstall' option from the pop-up menu to remove that app from your PC.

35 RUN APP AS ADMIN

If you want to run installed apps with escalated privileges for more freedom, right-click on them and select the 'Run as administrator' option. Remember, however, this facility is available only for regular apps and isn't available for Modern apps.

36 USE THE POWER USER MENU

The new Start menu doesn't bring back Control Panel to the menu list, but you've still got the power user menu from Windows 8. Right-click on the Start icon or hit [Win]+[X] to bring it up.

37 SIGN OUT OF WINDOWS

The Power section in the Start menu only includes options to Shutdown and Restart the computer. To sign in as a different user bring up the Start menu and click on your name displayed at the top. This brings up a menu that includes the Sign out option.



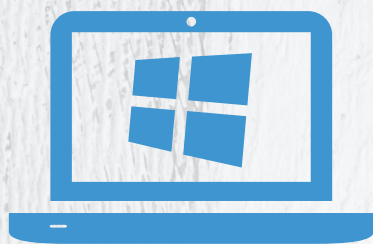
40 New Action Center

Windows 10 includes a new Action Center that keeps track of notifications from all over the system. Click on the text bubble icon in the system tray and the panel flows out from the right-hand side of the screen.

39 Find apps faster

After click 'All apps' in the Start menu you can avoid scrolling through the alphabetically arranged list of apps, by clicking on a letter to view the alphabet. Now click any letter that takes you directly to the apps grouped underneath it.





WINDOWS APPS

41 PRINT TO PDF

You can now save documents as PDFs without any third-party software as both the Modern apps and the traditional desktop programs offer the option as part of their standard printing options.

42 MAIL GESTURES

The new Mail app in Windows 10 supports a couple of gestures for common tasks. Click on the gears icon in the app to bring up the Settings and switch to the 'Option' section. Now enable the 'Swipe actions' option and use the menu to define actions for the left and right swipe gestures.

43 MAKE CORTANA RESPOND TO VOICE

For hands-free operation, click on the Cortana search bar, select 'Notebook' from the left menu, choose 'Settings', and enable the 'Let Cortana respond to "Hey Cortana"' option. Now repeat the phrase at any time to activate Cortana.

44 MAKE CORTANA RESPOND ONLY TO YOU

You can now ask Cortana to respond only to your voice. Head back to the Settings in the Notebook and press the 'Learn my voice' button and say the phrases so Cortana can recognise your voice.

45 CORTANA NATURAL LANGUAGE SEARCH

Since Cortana understands natural language you can use it for complex search tasks. For example, ask Cortana to "Find pictures from August" and it will rummage through your local and online files and apply filters to fetch results.

48 SEND AN EMAIL WITH CORTANA

You can also use Cortana to send an email hands-free. Say "Send an email to [Name]"

followed by the message. Cortana will search for the name in the People app and compose the email using your spoken text. If you don't wish to make any changes, just say "Send".

49 MANAGE CONTACTS

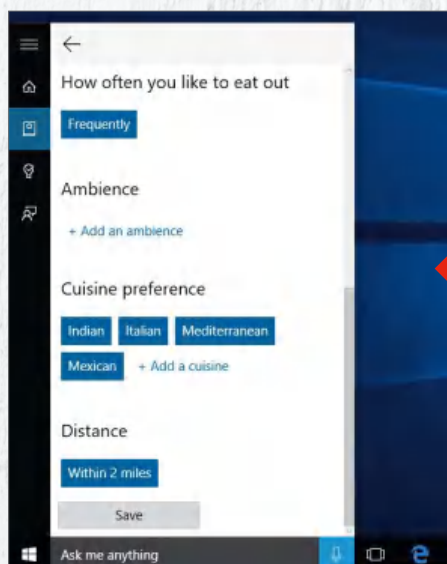
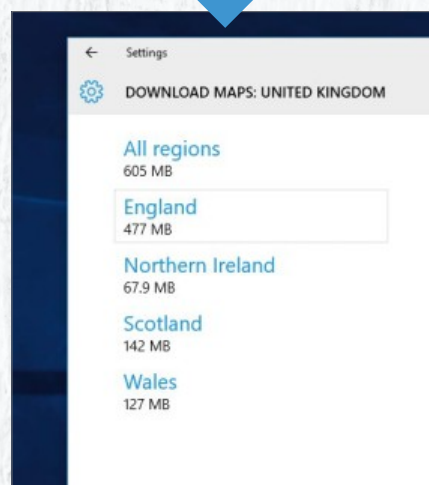
A contact in the People app can include an email address, work/home address and more. And depending on what information has been added to the contact, you can use the app to launch a Map view of the address or compose an email to the contact.

50 CORTANA IN THE EDGE BROWSER

Cortana can also help you as you browse the web. To enable it in Microsoft Edge, go to 'Settings > Advanced Settings > View Advanced Settings' and under 'Privacy and Services' enable 'Have Cortana Assist Me in Microsoft Edge'.

46 Offline maps

Save time and money when searching for directions on the go by downloading an offline version of a map. Head to 'Start > Settings > System > Offline Maps' and then click the 'Download maps' button. Now you can drill down to the geographic region you're interested in to download the map.



47 Share your preferences with Cortana

You can receive better recommendations if you let Cortana know your preferences. For example, open Cortana's Notebook and head to 'Eat & Drink' to define your choice of cuisine, price range and more. Repeat the process for other sections.

51 EDGE READING ENHANCEMENT

Edge has a distraction-free view for reading web pages that you can switch to by clicking on the Reading View icon (or [Ctrl]+[Shift]+[R]). To configure the Reading View head to Settings and scroll down to the Reading section.

52 MOVE PHOTOS FROM YOUR PHONE

Plug your Android/iOS phone to your Windows 10 computer using the regular microUSB cable. This will launch the new Phone Companion app with information about your phone. Now scroll and select the 'Import photos and videos into the Photos app' option.

53 SELECTIVELY SYNC FOLDERS WITH ONEDRIVE

OneDrive is now more flexible and user-friendly. To customise the folders it syncs, right-click on the OneDrive icon in the notification area, select Settings, switch to the 'Choose folders' tab, and click the 'Choose folders' button to select the cloud folders that you want available locally.

54 ACCESS FILES REMOTELY

Under the OneDrive Settings tab, if you toggle the 'Let me use OneDrive to fetch any of my files on this PC' option, you can access your files from another computer using the OneDrive website.

56 ENABLE NEW FEATURES IN COMMAND PROMPT

The new Command Prompt in Windows 10 allows you to use [Ctrl]+[C]/[V] to copy and paste commands more easily. To activate the feature, open the Command Prompt, right-click its title bar and select

55 Contact Support

If you need help setting up a Windows app or are facing any issue, you can use the Contact Support app under the 'Start > All apps menu'. The app will help you find discussions relevant to your technical problems on the community forums.

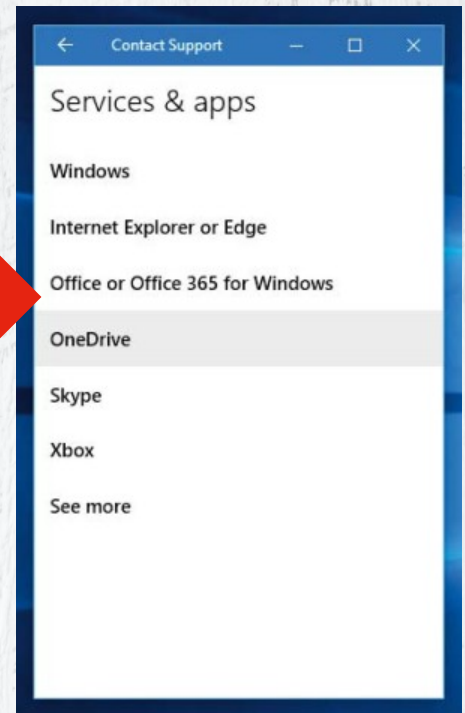
Properties. From there you can find and enable the new features under the 'Edit Options' section.

57 RECORD A VIDEO OF AN APP

You can now use Windows 10's Game DVR function to record video of any open app or desktop software. Press [Win]+[G] to open the game bar that has a circular Record button. Recorded videos are saved under 'Video > Captures' folder. Note that recording may slow performance depending on the demands of the app.

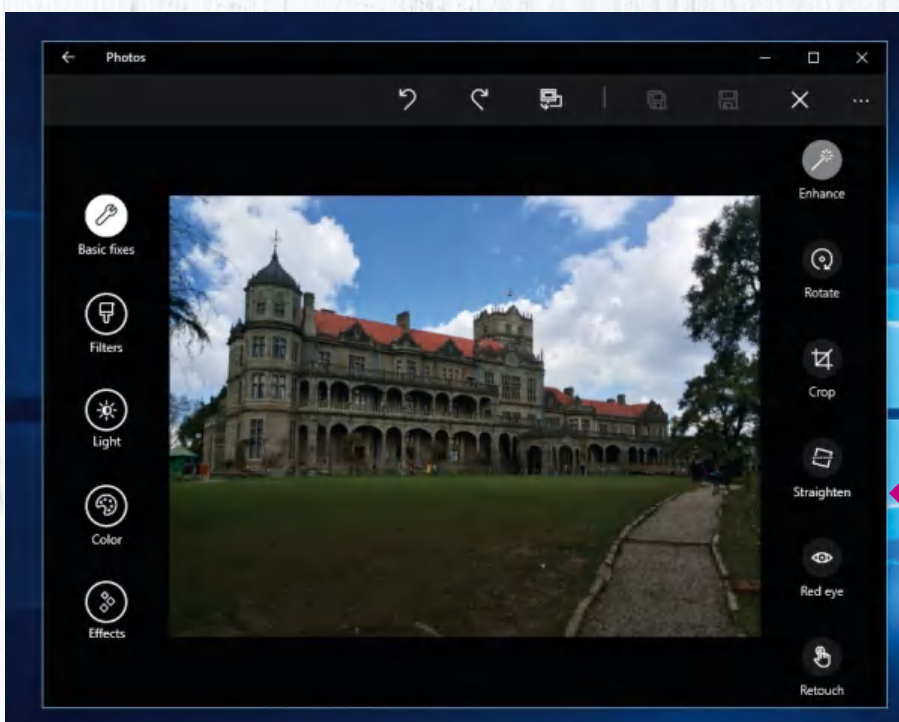
58 AUTOMATICALLY BACKUP LIBRARIES

To back up your libraries, plug in an external drive and head over to 'Start > Settings > Update & Security > Backup'. Click on the 'Add a drive' option and select the plugged in drive and then enable the option, found under 'File History'.



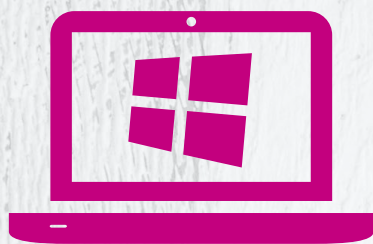
59 ACCESS PREVIOUS VERSIONS OF FILES

Once you've set up the File History preference, you can right-click on any file, select 'Properties', and open the 'Previous Versions' tab to see past revisions to the file saved by either File History or Windows' system restore points.



60 Edit and share photos

You can use the built-in Photos app to fix many common photo flaws. You can straighten and sharpen images and apply filters and effects. If you have installed social apps such as Facebook or Twitter you can use Photos to share images with friends and family.



SETTINGS & TWEAKS

61 BYPASS THE SIGN-IN SCREEN

Make booting up quicker by logging straight into Windows. Type **netplwiz** in the search bar to bring up the User Accounts window. In the Users tab, deselect the 'Users must enter a username and password to use this computer' option.

62 ANALYSE AVAILABLE STORAGE SPACE

To figure out what kind of files are taking up room on your computer, head to 'Start > Settings > System > Storage' and click on the drive name to get a breakdown of how the space is being used.

63 SAVE APPS TO EXTERNAL DRIVES

If you use an SSD as your system drive you can ask Windows 10 to install apps on another disk by heading to 'Start > Settings > System > Storage' and pointing to it under the 'New apps will save to' option.

64 CUSTOMISE YOUR DEFAULT APP ASSOCIATIONS

If the default file associations don't work for you, you can change them by right-clicking on a file and selecting the 'Open with' option. Now select the 'Choose another app' option and pick the app you wish to use.

65 DEFINE KEYBOARD SHORTCUT FOR APPS

To get faster access to apps, you can launch them by using custom keyboard shortcuts. For this, right-click on an app's icon and head to 'Properties > Shortcut'. Now click inside the text box labelled 'Shortcut key' and press any key.

66 SET DISPLAY FOR EACH MONITOR

With Windows 10 you can configure different DPI scaling ratios if you've got multiple monitors attached to your computer. Right-click on the desktop and head to 'Display settings', which lets you configure each detected display individually.

67 DISABLE WI-FI SENSE

If you're worried about Wi-Fi Sense's security implications you can disable it by heading to 'Start > Settings > Network & Internet > Wi-Fi > Manage Wi-Fi settings'. Now disable all options and ask Windows 10 to forget any Wi-Fi networks you've signed into in the past.

68 CUSTOMISE THE BATTERY SAVER

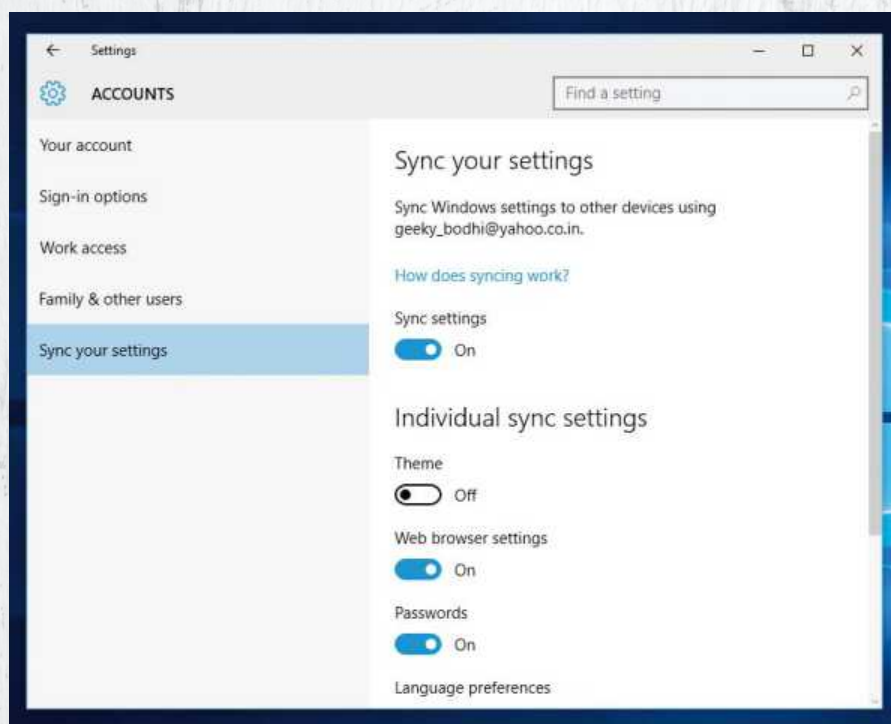
The Windows 10 Battery Saver clamps down on background activities in order to maximise your system's battery. You can enable it from under 'Start > Settings > System > Battery Saver'. It comes online automatically when the charge drops below 20%.

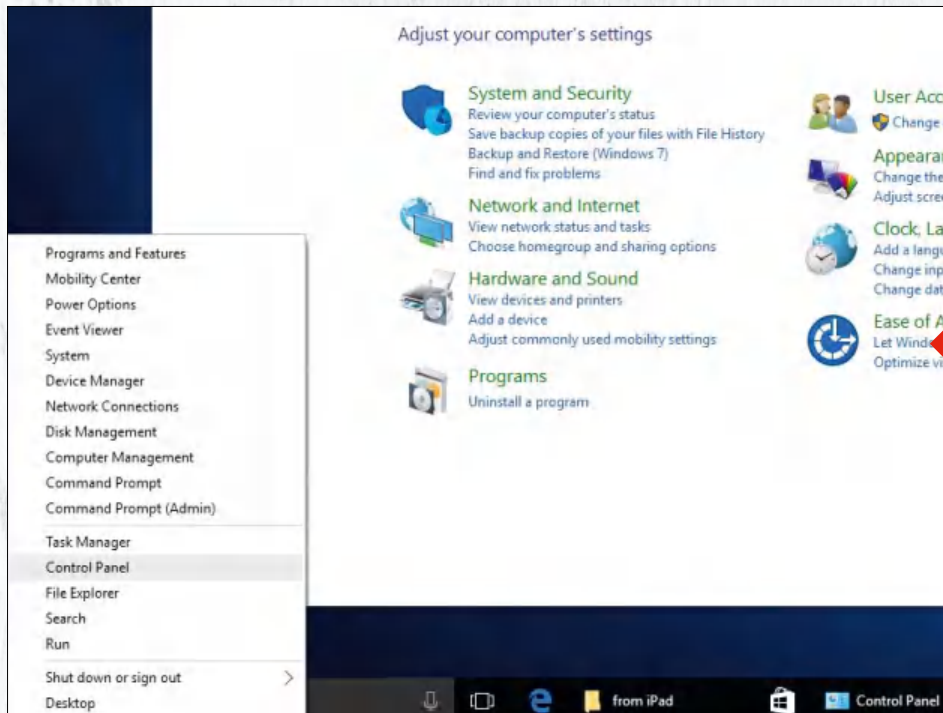
69 'GOD MODE'

God Mode is a one-stop panel that gathers all Control Panel commands

70 Customise Sync settings

You can easily take charge of the settings that synced from the current installation to your online account. Head over to 'Start > Settings > Accounts > Sync your settings' and disable any of the listed settings that you don't want to sync with your Microsoft account.





78 Find the original Control Panel

The new Settings panel is easy to navigate and is easier to navigate than the old Control Panel. But the latter is still available and comes in handy for accessing advanced options. You can find it under the [Win]+[X] power user menu.

within Windows 10. Create a folder on your desktop named: GodMode.{ED7BA470-8E54-465E-825C-99712043E01C}. Once made, the folder will change to the Control Panel icon and be renamed to 'GodMode'.

71 USE MAXIMUM CPU
You can make sure you are using the maximum power of your main processor on a desktop PC by heading to 'Control Panel > Hardware and Sound > Power Options. Here click Change Advanced Power settings > Processor power management > Minimum processor state' and change it to 100%.

72 CUSTOMISE YOUR APP NOTIFICATIONS
Notifications from all the installed apps can make you miss the real important ones. To curb notifications head to 'Start > Settings > System > Notifications & action'. Scroll down and selectively turn off apps that you don't want to hear from.

73 NO AUTOMATIC UPDATES
By default some Windows updates will automatically restart your computer to finish installing. To put yourself in charge, head to 'Start > Settings > Updates and Security > Windows Update > Advanced Options'. Under the 'Choose how updates are installed' pull-down menu, select the 'Notify to schedule restart' option.

74 SCHEDULE RESTARTS
To continue working uninterrupted, you can ask Windows 10 to delay applying an update that requires a restart. Head to 'Start > Settings > Updates & security'. If you have an update pending, you can schedule your reboot after selecting the 'Select a restart time' radio button.

75 GET UPDATES FROM OTHER SOURCES

Windows 10 lets you download updates from other computers on the network and the internet using peer-to-peer technology, rather than Microsoft directly. To tinker with the setting, head to 'Settings > Update & Recovery > Windows Update > Advanced Options > Choose' how you download updates.

76 REMOVE OLD FILES
If you have no intentions of reverting to the previous version of Windows, you can save disk space by getting rid of the old OS files. Head over to 'Control Panel > System and Security > Administrative Tools > Disk Clean-up' and toggle the 'Previous Windows installations' box in the list.

79 SETUP METERED CONNECTIONS

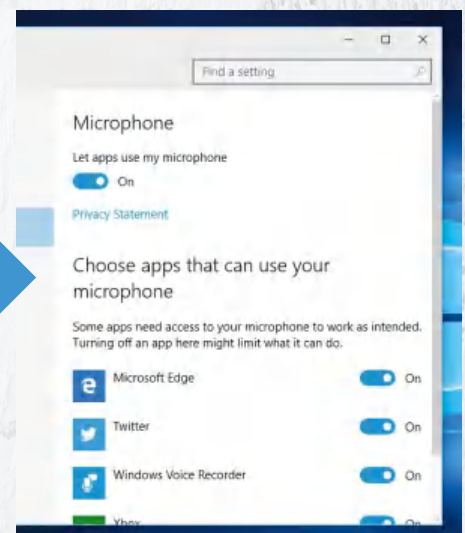
If you are connected to a mobile Wi-Fi hotspot, you might want to configure it as a metered connection to restrict your data usage. Head over to 'Notifications > All settings > Network & Internet > WiFi > Advanced options' and under 'Metered connection' enable the 'Set as metered connection' option.

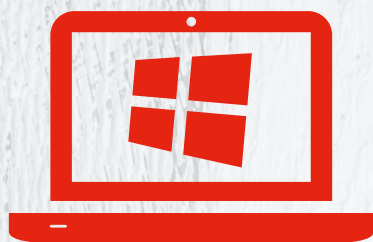
80 UNLOCK YOUR PC WITH A FINGERPRINT

Windows 10 includes a suite of new biometric security features known as Windows Hello. If you have the required hardware then you can use fingerprint detection or face recognition to log in. Head to 'Start > Settings > Accounts > Sign-in' options to explore the various available options.

77 Customise Privacy settings

To take charge of general and app-specific privacy options head over to 'Start > Settings > Privacy'. From here you can also individually define which apps can access the connected hardware like Cameras and microphones.





ADVANCED TRICKS

81 SLIDE DOWN THE DESKTOP TO SHUTDOWN
Head to 'Windows > System32' and double-click on the `slidetoshutdown.exe` program. Performing this action from now on will drop in your lock screen image from the top and cover half of your screen. Just slide the image to the bottom of your screen to shut down your computer.

82 GENERATE A BATTERY REPORT
If you want to keep tabs on your laptop's battery level, launch the Administrative command prompt and type the following command `powercfg -energy -output C:\report.html`. The command will analyse the battery status and create a Power Efficiency Diagnostics Report in the root directory of the C: drive.

83 DISABLE DATA COLLECTION
To prevent your computer from communicating with Microsoft HQ, type `services` in the Start menu search bar

to bring up the Services Management console. Now find and disable the services named 'Diagnostics Tracking Service' and 'dmwappushsvc'. You're done.

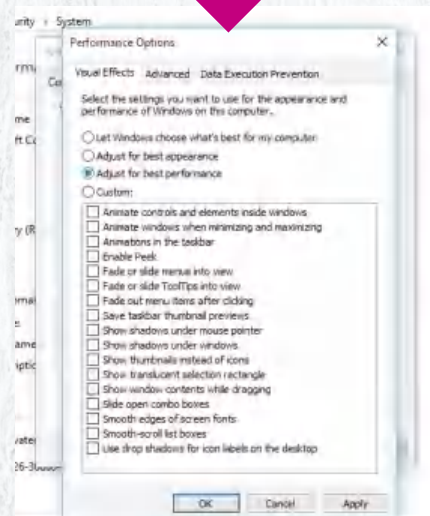
84 IMPROVED REGISTRY EDITOR
If you use the Registry Editor, Windows 10 now lets you navigate the quintessential power user app with ease. You can now jump between the same entries under the `HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE` and `HKEY_CURRENT_USER` hives using a special context-menu entry.

85 CREATE A RECOVERY DISC
Plug in a USB drive and head to 'Start > Settings' and type `recovery` in the Find a setting textbox and select the 'Create a recovery drive' option. This will launch a wizard which wipes the USB drive and transforms it into a recovery drive.

88 CREATE A SYSTEM IMAGE
Head to 'Start > Settings' and type `file` in the textbox and select the 'File History'

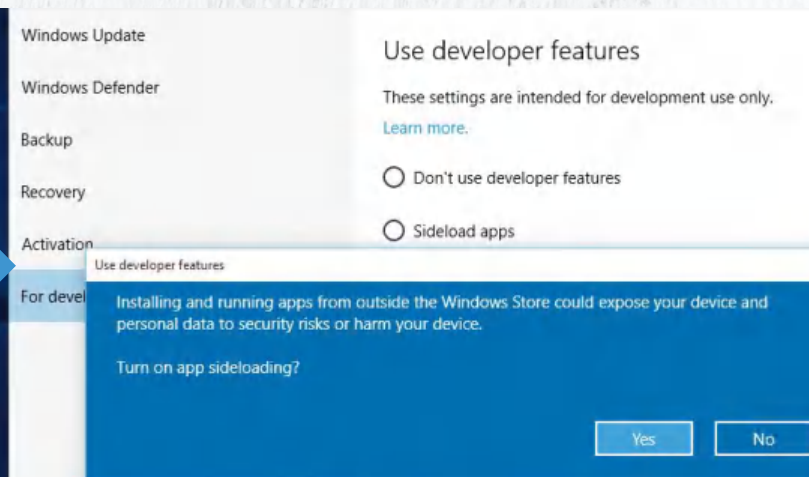
87 Decrease effects

If you are running Windows 10 on a resource strapped machine, you can squeeze more performance by turning down the bling. Head to 'Control Panel > System and Security > System' and click 'Advanced system settings'. Now click 'Settings' under the Performance section and customise the effects.



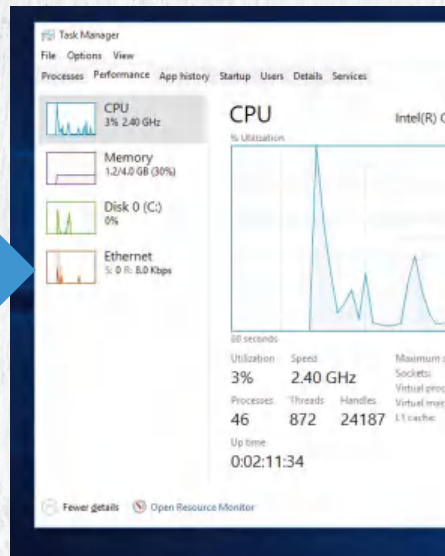
86 Side load Windows apps

Just like Android, Windows 10 now lets you install Windows apps from other sources besides the Windows Store. To enable this action, simply head over to 'Start > Settings > Update & security > For developers' and click the 'Sideload app' option.



95 Monitor with Task Manager

Windows 10 also includes an improved Task Manager with a better layout and easily digestible information and useful graphs. Familiarise yourself with the Task Manager to monitor the resources of your PC and to terminate unresponsive processes.



96 Disable new battery flyout

To bring back the old battery display in the taskbar, head to the `HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\ImmersiveShell` key in the Registry Editor. Here create a new DWORD named `UseWin32BatteryFlyout` and set its value to 1.

tool. Click the 'System Image Backup' link in the lower-left corner to start a wizard; this lets you select the destination drive for storing the backup image.

89 RESTART EXPLORER

To quickly apply changes that require restarting the computer, launch the Task manager by right-clicking on the taskbar. Click the 'More Details' button and under the 'Processes' tab look for an entry named 'Windows Explorer'. Then right-click on it and select 'Restart'.

90 CHANGE THE LOCATION OF EDGE'S DOWNLOADS

To force the Edge browser to use a custom Downloads folder, head to the Registry Editor and navigate to `HKEY_CURRENT_USER\SOFTWARE\Classes\Local Settings\Software\Microsoft\Windows\Current Version\AppContainer\Storage\microsoft.micrsoftedge_8wekyb3d8bbwe\MicrosoftEdge\Main` key. Create a new String named 'Default Download Directory' and set its value to the path of the new folder, such as `D:\Downloads`.

91 STREAM MEDIA ACROSS THE NETWORK

Go to 'Control Panel > Network and Internet > Network and Sharing Center' and click on 'Change advance sharing settings'. Then go to All Network section and click the 'Choose media streaming options' link and turn on media sharing.

92 STREAMLINE THE NAVIGATION PANE

To remove the OneDrive link in Windows Explorer launch the registry editor and head over to the key: `HKEY_CLASSES_ROOT\CLSID\{018D5C66-4533-4307-9B53-224DE2ED1FE6}`. Then in the right-side pane, change the value of the System. `IsPinnedToNameSpaceTree` variable to '0'.

93 MODIFY WINDOWS UPDATE POLICY

If you want to always be notified of an impending Windows update, you can change the setting in the Registry Editor. Launch regedit and head to the `HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows` key. Here create a new key under Windows key and set its name as `WindowsUpdate`. Then create another new key under `WindowsUpdate` key named `AU`. Here create a new DWORD named `AUOptions` and set its value to '2'. Lastly click 'Check for updates' in Windows Update to bring the changes into effect.

94 RESTORE THE PREVIOUS VOLUME CONTROL UI

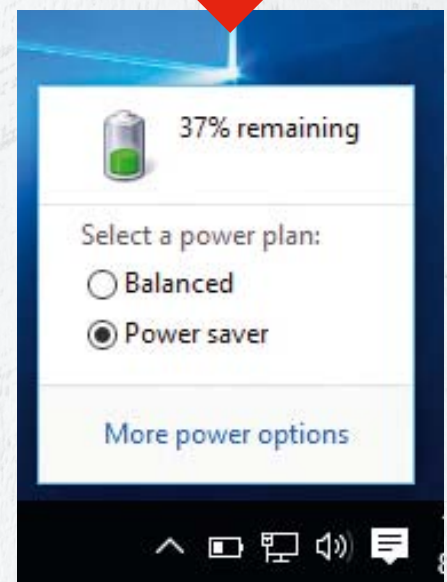
To bring back the vertical volume lever in the system tray, simply bring up the Registry Editor and head over to the `HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion` key. Then create a new key named `MTCUVC` and under it create a new DWORD named `EnableMtcUvc` and set its value to '0'. The volume control UI will be restored.

97 CREATE A LOCAL ACCOUNT

If you don't want the benefits of OneDrive synchronised account, you can create a standalone offline account. Head to 'Start > Settings > Accounts' and click the 'Sign in with a local account instead' link.

98 SPEED UP APP LAUNCHES AT BOOT

On a super-fast machine you can disable the artificial app startup delay. Launch regedit and navigate to `HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer`. Right click Explorer, select 'New > Key', and name it `Serialize`. Under this key, simply create a DWORD value called `StartupDelayInMSec` and set it to '0'.



99 CUSTOMISE THE POWER USER MENU

To reorganise and or remove entries go to `C:\Users\<username>\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\WinX`. Here you'll notice three folders that house entries for the Power User menu. You can move them around or remove them to suit your workflow.

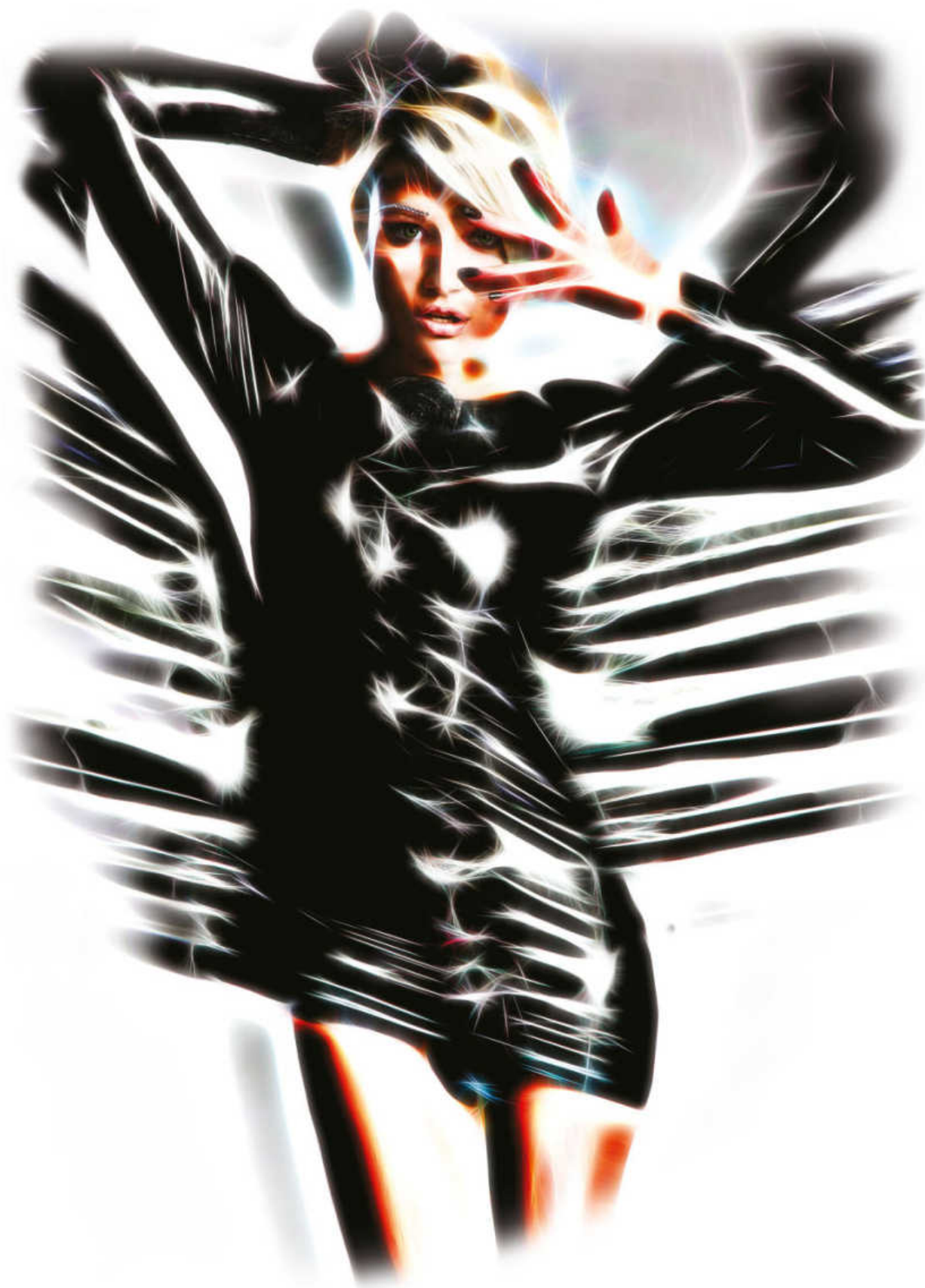
100 ENABLE THE ADMIN ACCOUNT

By default, the built-in Administrator account is hidden to users. To enable it, launch the Command Prompt as Administrator and type `net user administrator /active:yes`. Now logout to see the newly added Administrator account on the login screen.



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Explore

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Welcome



Whether you're stuck for inspiration or want to become a master of your

Windows computer, our Explore section is the place to come. Each month we pack it with tutorials covering a range of subjects suitable for all levels of expertise.

This month we share several ways to get the most from Windows 10. Nick introduces Cortana, and shows how to be more efficient, with Control Panel. While the other Nick unlocks Windows 10's secret features. There's never been a better time to see how your PC can make your life easier!

Graham Barlow
Editor-in-chief

graham.barlow@futurenet.com

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*Your guide
Nick Peers says...*

"Microsoft Cortana promises to help you take control of your life"


*Turn to page 38
for more*




Our promise to you...

Get more from Windows, software and all your favourite sites


Packed with informative tutorials

 Every issue, we guarantee to pack the magazine with great tutorials teaching you all the best things you can do with your PC. Each article features step-by-step instructions to make learning new skills fast and enjoyable.


Customise Windows to work your way

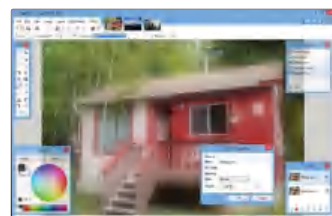
 We all know how to do the basics but getting the most from Windows isn't always easy. Our dedication to the operating system means you get the very best tips and tricks for all versions of Windows.

Get more from your favourite websites

 We all have our list of favourite sites but often we miss out on great features because they're difficult to use or hidden from sight. We'll show you how to do more online, for a more satisfying web life.

Discover new programs with our help

 From speed-up and security software to superb photo apps, there's always something new to try on your PC. The Windows Store in Windows 10 and Windows 8.1 is packed with software to download.



Learn how to...

Use OneDrive to store your photos and files



Your guide *Cat Ellis* says...

"Thanks to Microsoft's cloud storage, the days of plugging in fiddly cables are over"

At a glance

Skill level...

- ▶ Anyone can do it
- Straightforward
- Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

- Windows 10
- Windows 8.1
- Windows 7

If you've taken your first steps into the world of **cloud computing**, you might already be familiar with Microsoft OneDrive. The service, formerly known as SkyDrive, is a free tool that enables you to store your files online and retrieve them through a web browser – a little like an extra hard drive that you can access anywhere remotely. It comes built into Windows 8.1 and 10, but there's also a desktop app available to download from <http://onedrive.live.com>.

In the wake of its success on the desktop, Microsoft has now launched mobile apps that bring all the convenience of OneDrive to your **Android** or **iOS** devices. Not only does this enable you to open your files and work with them on the move, it also enables you to back up photos and videos taken on your phone so a stolen handset doesn't mean lost memories. Let's get started!

MENU

Tap here to choose the type of files to view (photos or other documents), adjust your sharing options, and access or empty your recycling bin.

ALBUMS

These are a convenient way to group photos together and share them with your contacts. OneDrive has access to your phone's address book for this

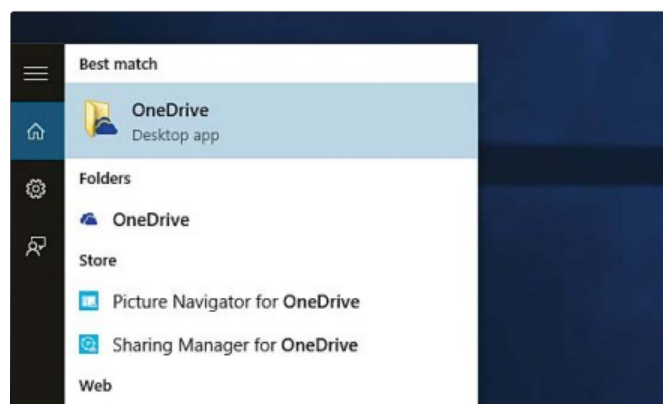
SEARCH

OneDrive gives you lots of free space, so sometimes you might need to search for what you need. This can be text within a document, or tags.

TAGS

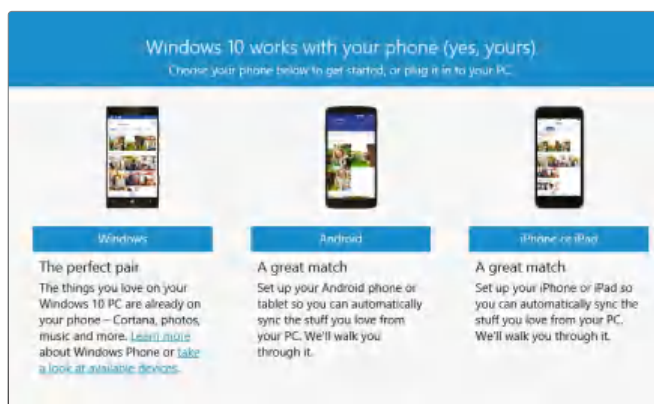
OneDrive uses the power of Bing – Microsoft's search engine – to guess the subjects of your photos and apply appropriate tags to organise them.

Step-by-step | One drive for everything



1 Discover OneDrive

When you installed Windows 10, you will have been asked to create a Microsoft account. This account includes access to OneDrive; type **OneDrive** into the Start menu and select the desktop app to access your online storage area. You can also access your account via File Explorer, and it appears as an option when you save a file in any Microsoft Office app.



2 Going mobile

Now you're familiar with OneDrive, it's time to move beyond the desktop. Windows 10 was created with mobile in mind, so it's easy to access and synchronise files across devices. To begin, type **companion** into the Start menu and select 'Phone companion'. You'll be prompted to choose your device's operating system. Here, we're going to set up an Android phone.

Jargon buster!

► **Cloud computing**
Using online servers to store and manage your files remotely.

► **Android**
Google's operating system for mobile devices, including your smartphones and tablets.

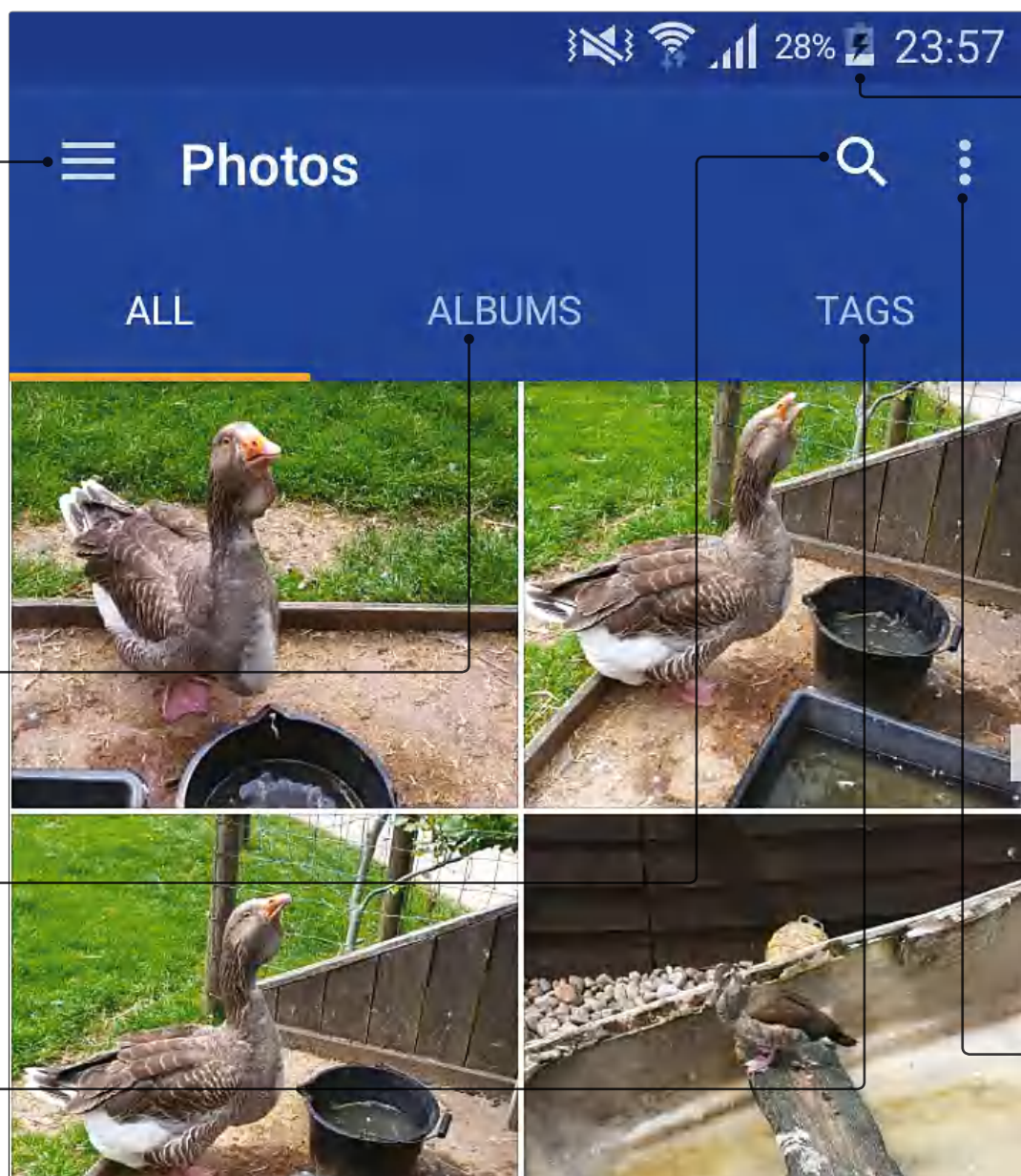
► **iOS**
Apple's mobile operating system, used by the iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch.


BATTERY

Keep an eye on your phone's power level. OneDrive uses a lot of juice, and your photos will stop synchronising if your battery is running empty.

OPTIONS

Click here to activate 'Camera Upload', and to refresh the contents of your OneDrive to reflect any changes you've made on another device.



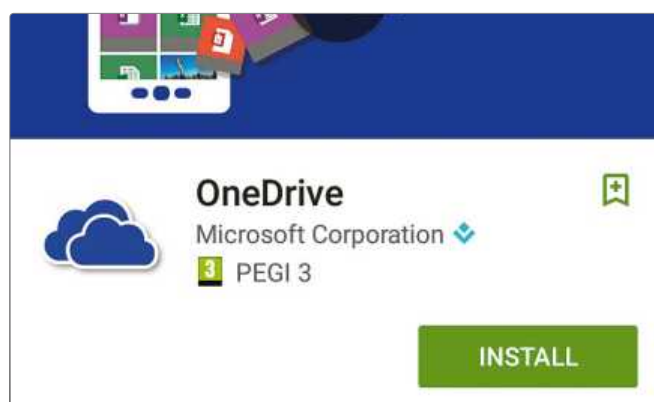
 Automatically get photos from your phone or tablet onto your PC
Step 1 of 4

Get photos onto your PC using OneDrive for Android – it's free

When you take a photo or video with your phone or tablet, it's automatically uploaded to OneDrive, so you can get to it in the Photos app on your PC.

Download it for your phone or tablet from [Google Play](#), or email yourself a link. Use an email address that you can easily check on your phone or tablet:

While the app is downloading, continue to the next step.



3 Photo transfer

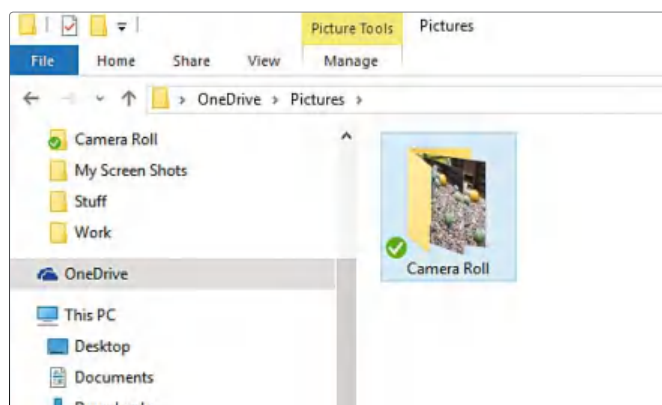
Once you've made your choice, you'll see the Microsoft services available (plus any coming soon). The second option – automatically get photos taken with your phone or tablet onto your PC – uses OneDrive to transfer your snaps to your desktop; no cables required. Select this option, and then verify that you're logged into Windows with your own Microsoft account.

4 Get the app

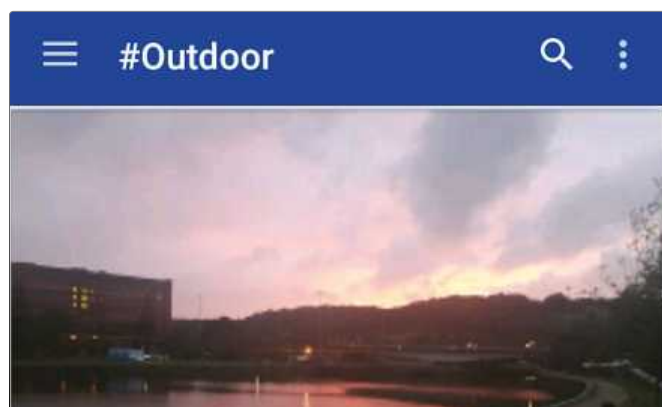
Now you need to download and install the OneDrive app on your phone or tablet. You can do this through your phone's app store, or enter an email address to send yourself a direct link. The installation file is 28MB, so it's best to download it over a Wi-Fi connection rather than 4G if you have a limited monthly data allowance.



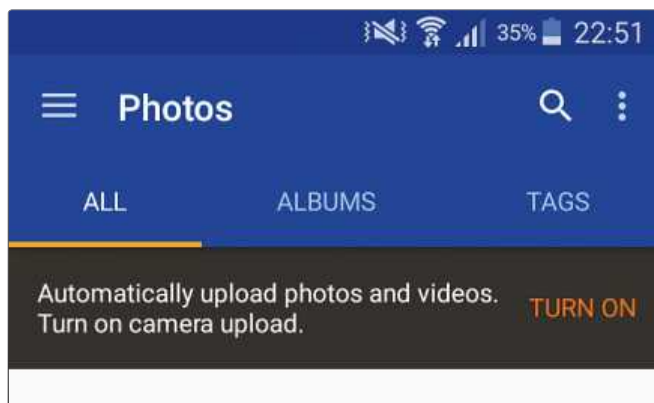
5 Log in Click the 'Next' button on your PC and you'll be prompted to sign into the OneDrive app on your phone using your Microsoft account details. Open the app and click 'Sign in', then enter your email address and password. Once you've logged in, you'll be asked whether you want to upload the photos and videos already on your device. Tap 'Not now'.



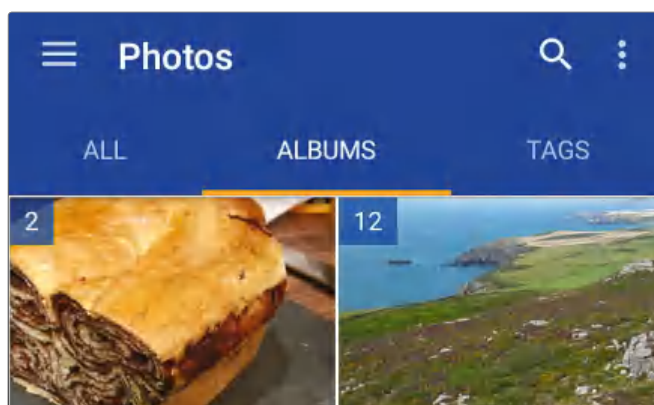
7 Auto sync Now close the guide on your PC and open your OneDrive folder in File Explorer. Open 'Pictures' and you'll see a folder named 'Camera roll'; this is where all pictures from your phone will be stored. If you can see a green tick beside the folder, all your pictures have been synchronised. If there are two blue arrows, the pictures are currently being updated.



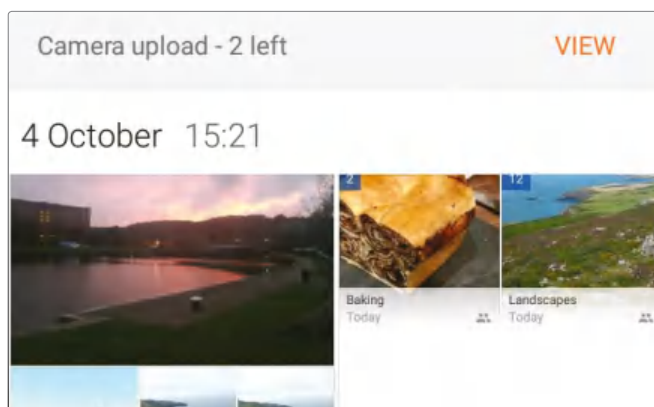
9 Smarter tagging Tags are a useful way to categorise photos, but it's a chore tagging photos individually. That's not a problem with OneDrive, which uses Bing's image-recognition to guess the subject of each picture. It's accurate for the most part (although it's not infallible – in our tests, it tagged a hamster as #cat and #people). Select the option just below the search button to try it.



6 Camera Upload Back on your PC, check the box labelled 'I'm signed in to the OneDrive app on my phone or tablet' and click 'Next'. You'll now be asked to enable Camera Upload on your phone – to do this, open the app's menu, then select 'Settings > Photos > Turn on'. If your phone is connected to Wi-Fi, it will now begin uploading all the photos from its camera reel to OneDrive automatically.



8 Album art When you tap and hold your finger on a photo, a selection of options appear in the top bar. One of the most useful is the ability to add photos to albums. This not only keeps them neatly organised, it enables you to share a collection of pictures rather than individual snaps – ideal for pictures from a special event.



10 All together now Congratulations, all the photos taken with your phone will synchronise automatically with your OneDrive account! Not only can you now access them from your PC, but from any internet-connected device – including those on different mobile operating systems. If you have another smartphone or tablet, installing OneDrive on both will combine your snaps into one place. ■

COMPETITION



WIN!

A BB-8 DROID

To celebrate the release of **Star Wars: The Force Awakens**, we are giving readers the chance to win **one of five BB-8 droids by Sphero.**

With this gadget you can design a route for BB-8 and control from your smart device. You can also create and send holographic videos.

BB-8 will learn to recognise your voice, and adapt personality as you interact.

Who wouldn't want one?

All you have to do to be in with a chance of owning one of these remarkable gadgets is answer the following question:

WHAT EPISODE IS STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS?

A. VII

B. VI

C. IV

ENTER ONLINE NOW FOR FREE AT

www.futurecomps.co.uk/WIN-BB8

By taking part you agree to be bound by the Competition Rules. Open to UK and Republic of Ireland residents aged 18 and over. The closing date is 11:59pm on 31 December 2015 (GMT). Five winners drawn at random from the correct entries will be entitled to one BB-8 droid each. Specification may vary from pictured model. Only one entry per household; multiple entries will be disqualified. No cash equivalent. See www.futurepic.com/competition-rules for full terms and conditions.

Note: BB-8 is controlled by a smartphone app, which is available on Android and iOS. You are responsible for ensuring that BB-8 is compatible with your phone.

Learn how to... Get gaming on Windows 10



Your guide *Nick Peers* says...

"Windows 10 adds some welcome new features to its gaming repertoire. Discover how to set things up to take full advantage"

At a glance

Skill level...

- ▶ Anyone can do it
- Straightforward
- Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

- Windows 10
- Windows 8.1
- Windows 7

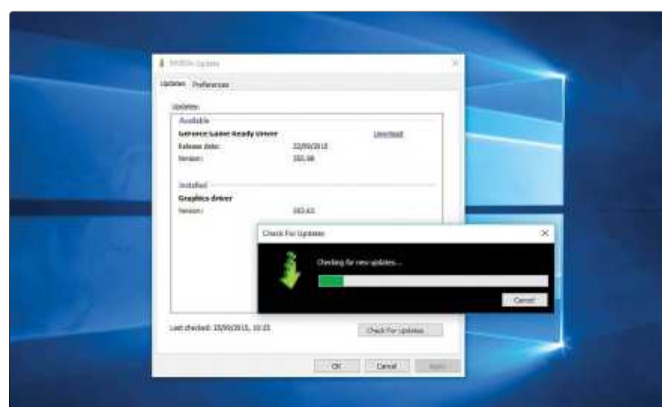
Microsoft has returned to Windows gaming with a vengeance in Windows 10. It's upgraded DirectX to version 12, which finally allows it to talk to your graphics card using more than one processor core. This means future games supporting DirectX 12 (as well as current games updated to support it) will run much quicker and be more responsive.

Other improvements centre around the new Xbox app, designed to link your PC with your Xbox for streaming games, reviewing your gaming history and staying in touch with your mates on the Xbox live platform. You can even use it as a remote control for your Xbox One's media content.

These new features are all well and good, but there are a few steps you should follow to make sure Windows 10 is set up for gaming heaven – read on to find out what you need to know.

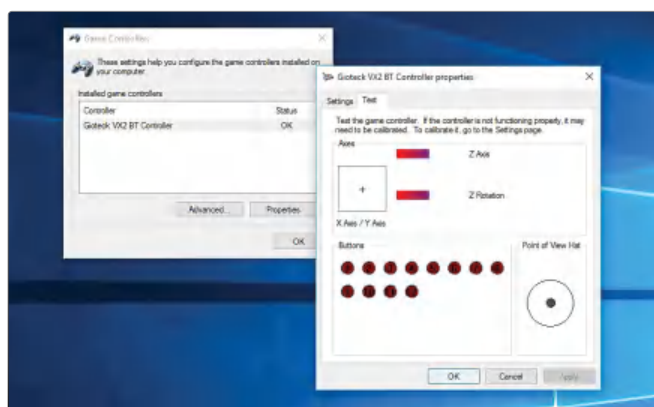


Step-by-step | Make Windows 10 gaming friendly



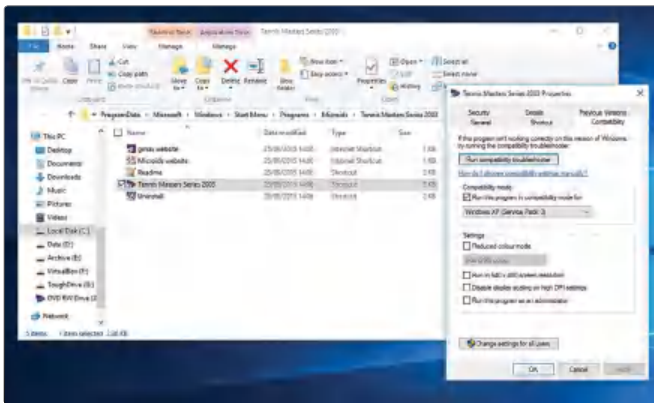
1 Upgrade drivers

Windows 10 won't necessarily have the latest drivers for your setup – it's usually better to install chipset and graphics drivers direct from the manufacturer, such as NVIDIA (nvidia.co.uk) or AMD (amd.com) for graphics. Trouble tracking down the latest drivers for your PC? Try a program like Driver Booster Free (iobit.com/en/driverbooster.php) to see if it can track them down.



2 Connect controllers

Plug in your game controller if you haven't already – it should be automatically detected and drivers downloaded and installed. Once done, type **controllers** into the Search box and click 'Set up USB game controllers'. Click 'Advanced' to choose which controller to use with older programs, and 'Properties' to verify your controller is working correctly (and calibrate it if not).



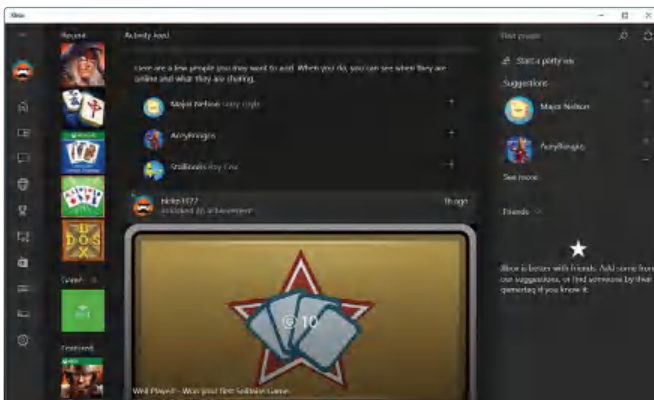
3 Check compatibility

If you've upgraded to Windows 10, check to see if any previously installed games still work – if they don't, visit the game's website to see if a compatibility patch is available or other tips for getting the game to work can be found (for example, using Compatibility Mode – right-click the program shortcut and choose 'Properties > Compatibility' to set this up).



5 Make Steam your gaming centre

You can add games you've installed independently of Steam to your library, making it your one-stop shop for gaming in Windows 10. To do this, visit your Library page, click '+ Add a Game...' and choose 'Add a Non-Steam Game'. Steam will list all installed programs on your PC, so it's up to you to identify your games and tick them, then click 'Add Selected Programs'.



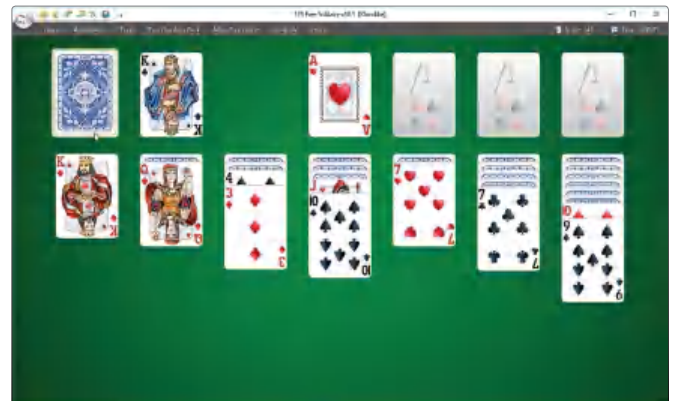
7 Go Xbox

Windows 10 introduces a new app called Xbox, which it hopes will eclipse Steam for gaming. Log in with your Microsoft Account if necessary, then follow the prompts to set up your Xbox account. Once done, use the icons down the left-hand side to navigate the app, customise your profile, manage your games and even connect Windows to your Xbox One console.



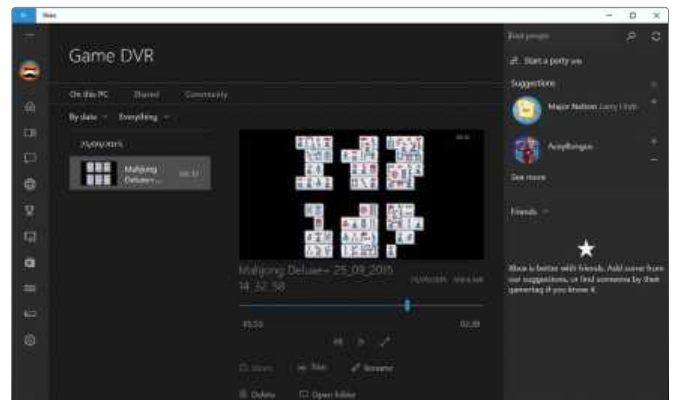
4 Get Steam

If you're a Steam user, visit store.steampowered.com and click 'Install Steam'. Download and install the main program, then log in with your account (you'll need to enter a code emailed to you to verify this computer). Once logged in, right-click the program's new taskbar notification area icon to download and restore previously purchased games or access your library.



6 Replacing missing Windows games

Windows 10 removes the free Microsoft games like Solitaire and Minesweeper. Instead, you can download free ad-supported versions from the App Store (ads can be removed by buying a subscription – £1.19 a month, £7.69 a year). Free alternatives include 123 Free Solitaire (www.123freesolitaire.com) – use a website such as alternativeto.net to help you find them.



8 Game DVR

When playing a game in windowed mode (not full-screen), press [Win]+[G] to open the Game bar. From here you can take screen snaps and – if your graphics card supports it – record live footage of your gaming, which you can then organise, rewatch and share with others in the main Xbox app. Configure Game DVR via its own tab in the Xbox app's Settings screen. ■



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Learn how to... Use Windows Update



Your guide **Nick Peers** says...

"Discover how to tame the worst excesses of Windows Update and regain control of your PC"

At a glance

Skill level...

Anyone can do it
► Straightforward
Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

Windows 10
Windows 8.1
Windows 7

The new Windows Update mechanism in Windows 10 has been rigidly designed. While there's good reason to ensure critical security patches and fixes are installed automatically, some Windows 10 users have already suffered from Microsoft's over-zealous policy of forcing updates before those updates have been properly tested.

Thankfully, there are some ways in which you can regain control of how Windows Update operates – particularly if you're a Windows 10 Pro user. But even if you're stuck with Windows 10 Home, where it's impossible to change the automatic setting, there are still tips, tricks and tools you can use to regain some control and make more from Windows Update. In this tutorial we'll reveal everything you need to put Windows Update back in its place.

SWITCH VIEW

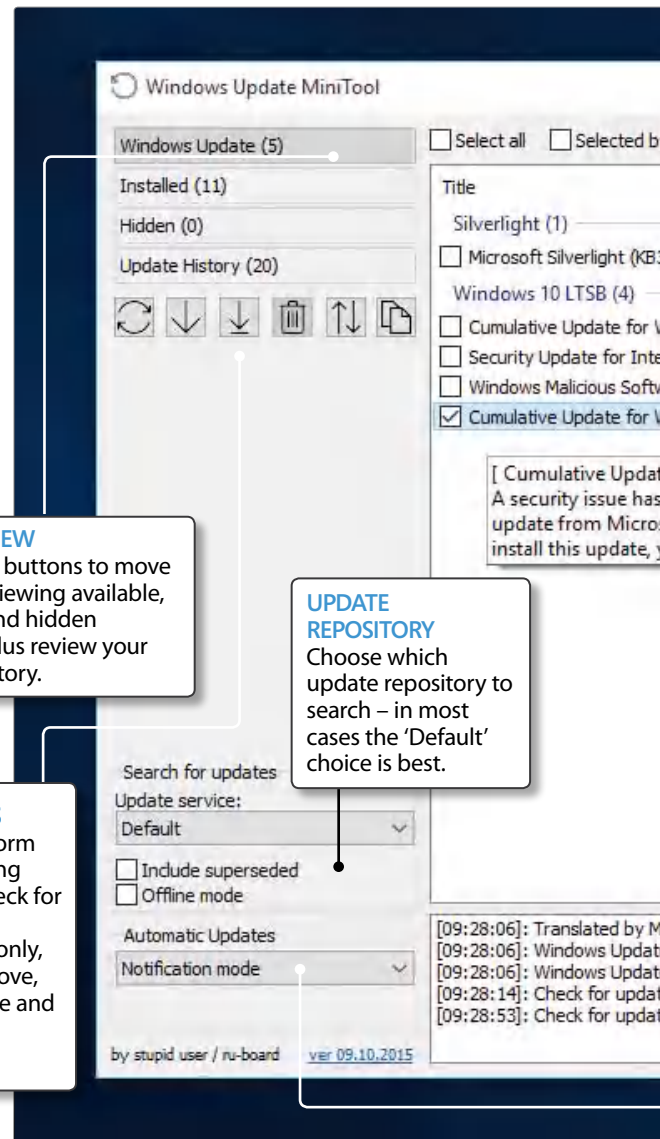
Click these buttons to move between viewing available, installed and hidden updates, plus review your update history.

CONTROLS

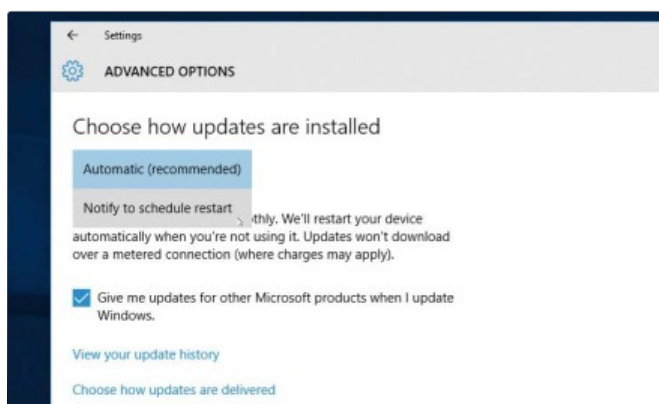
These perform the following actions: check for updates, download only, install, remove, hide/unhide and copy to clipboard.

UPDATE REPOSITORY

Choose which update repository to search – in most cases the 'Default' choice is best.

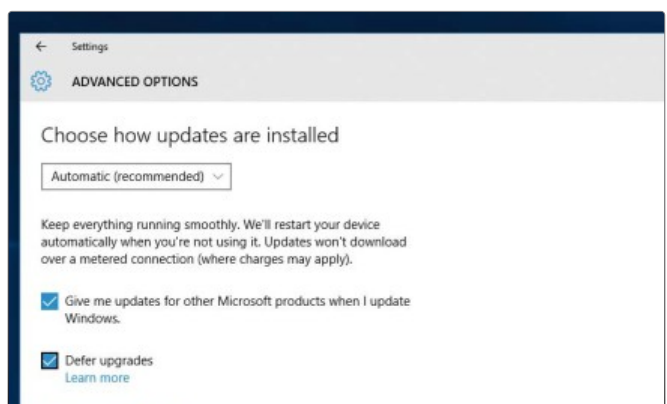


Step-by-step | Configure Windows Update



1 Basic settings

Click 'Start > Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update' to check for updates. Click 'Advanced options' to change how updates are installed – if you select 'Notify to schedule restart' you'll be prompted whenever updates have been downloaded and installed. You can also opt to receive updates for other Microsoft products like Office here – just tick the box.



2 Defer updates

Windows 10 Pro users can postpone non-essential updates, giving time for any bugs to be discovered and ironed out. Tick the 'Defer upgrades' box to enable this – you'll effectively be switched to the 'Current branch for Business', which means only essential security updates are installed immediately; others will be deferred until they've been more thoroughly tested (by Home users).

Jargon buster!

.7z file

A compressed file similar to zip files. Support isn't built into Windows, so a third-party app is required to extract its contents.

Group Policy Editor (gpedit.msc)

A Windows 10 Pro-only tool that allows users to configure various administrative and security settings without editing the Registry.

System type

The version of Windows – 32-bit or 64-bit – that is currently running. Right-click 'Start' and choose 'System' to find this out.

NICK'S BEST TIP

O&O ShutUp (oo-software.com/shutup10) is a privacy tool that also allows you to tweak Windows Update.

| Update | Category | Feature Packs | KB308333 | 11/08/2015 | 12.55 Mb |
|--|------------------|---------------|------------|------------|----------|
| Windows 10 for x64-based Systems (KB3093266) | Critical Updates | 3093266 | 30/09/2015 | 493.82 Mb | |
| Internet Explorer Flash Player for Windows 10 for x64-based Systems (KB309406) | Security Updates | 3099406 | 13/10/2015 | 18.19 Mb | |
| Software Removal Tool for Windows 8, 8.1, 10 and Windows Server 2012, 2012 R2 (KB309830) | Update Rollups | 890830 | 13/10/2015 | 14.71 Mb | |
| Windows 10 for x64-based Systems (KB3097617) | Security Updates | 3097617 | 13/10/2015 | 496.72 Mb | |

Windows 10 for x64-based Systems (KB3097617)]
 A problem has been identified in a Microsoft software product that could affect your system. You can help protect your system by installing this update. For a complete listing of the issues that are included in this update, see the associated Microsoft Knowledge Base article. After you install this update, you may have to restart your system.

Windows Update Agent version: 8.0 (10.0.10240.16397)
 Windows Update Service enabled
 Updates completed

CONFIGURE UPDATES

Click here to tweak automatic updates in Windows 10 Pro after you've followed step six of the guide.

VIEW UPDATES

All applicable updates based on your viewing choice are displayed here. Tick the box next to each to select them.

MORE INFO

Roll the cursor over an update to reveal this popup providing a detailed description.

Download Windows updates and apps from other PCs in addition to Microsoft. This can help speed up app and update downloads. [Learn more](#)

When this is turned on, your PC may also send parts of previously downloaded Windows updates and apps to PCs on your local network or PCs on the Internet, depending on what's selected below.

☒ On

Get updates from Microsoft, and get updates from and send updates to

☒ PCs on my local network

☐ PCs on my local network, and PCs on the Internet

Allow your PC to be discoverable by other PCs and devices on this network. We recommend turning this on for private networks at home or work, but turning it off for public networks to help keep your stuff safe.

☒ On

Metered connection

If you have a limited data plan and want more control over data usage, make this connection a metered network. Some apps might work differently to reduce data usage when you're connected to this network.

Set as metered connection

☒ On

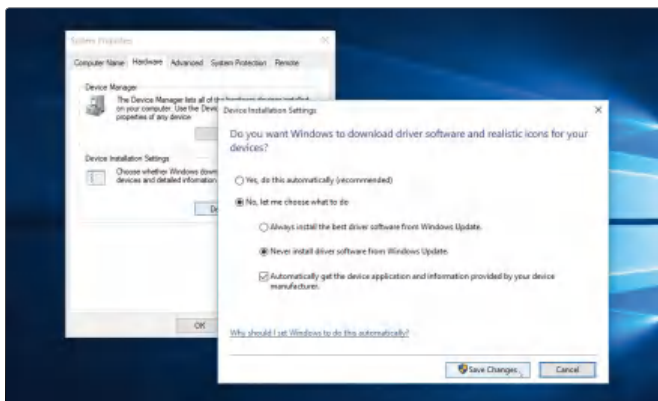
Properties

3 Control how updates are delivered

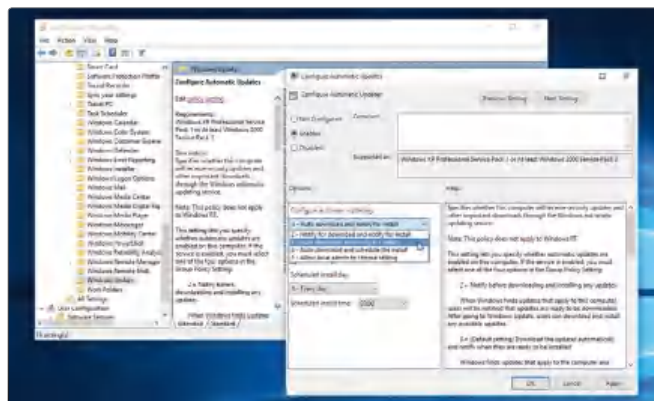
By default, Microsoft will use your PC to share updates with other computers, which will sap internet speed and use up any monthly allowance you may have. Click 'Choose how updates are delivered' to change this – flick the main switch to 'Off' if you only have one Windows 10 PC on your network, or choose 'PCs on my local network' to reduce internet usage in a multi-PC household.

4 Trick Windows Update

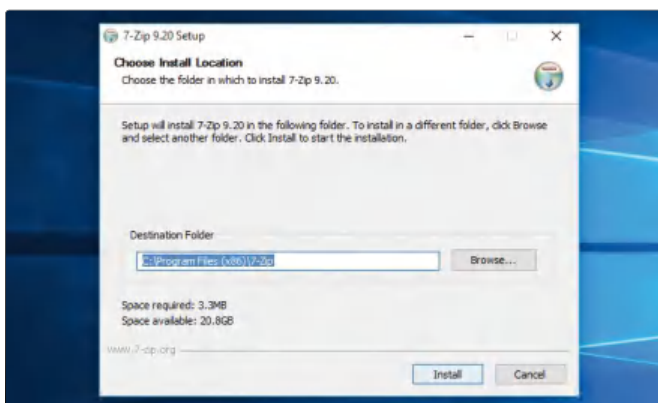
If you connect through a wireless connection, you can delay updates by claiming you're on a metered connection – click 'Start > Settings > Network & Internet > WiFi' and click 'Manage WiFi settings'. Flick the 'Metered Connection' switch to 'On' and updates won't be delivered until you switch it off. Set an alarm to remind yourself to flick it off periodically to check for updates manually.



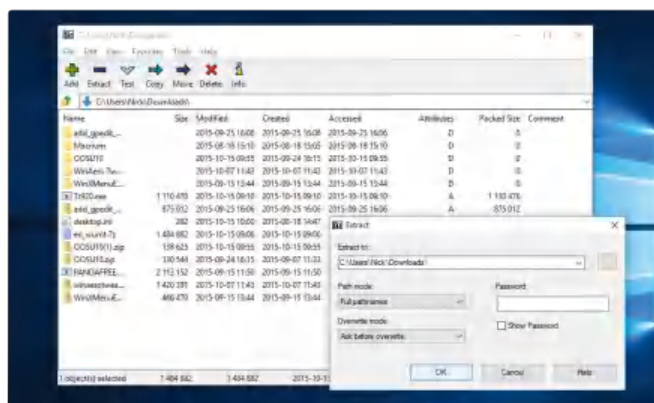
- 5 Disable automatic driver updates**
By default, Windows Update updates supported hardware devices too – if you'd prefer to manage this yourself, right-click the Start button and choose 'System'. Click 'Advanced System Settings', switch to the Hardware tab and click 'Device Installation Settings'. Select 'No, let me choose what to do' followed by 'Never install driver software...' and click 'Save Changes'.



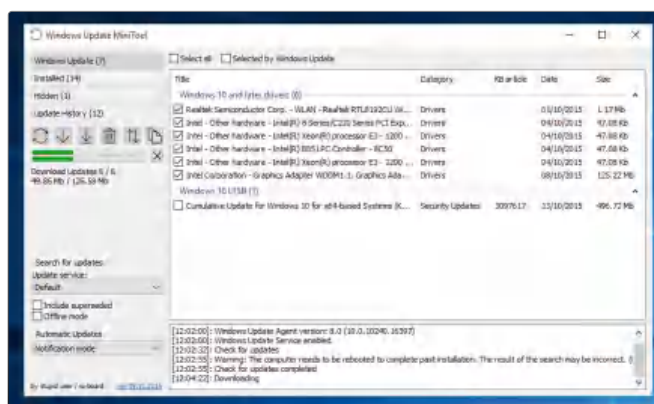
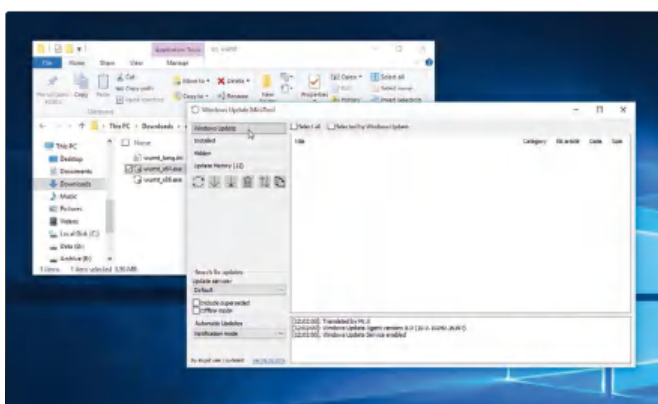
- 6 Disable automatic updates**
Pro edition users should type 'gpedit' into the Search box and click 'Edit group policy'. Expand 'Administrative Templates > Windows Components' under 'Computer Configuration' and select 'Windows Update'. Click 'Configure Automatic Updates' in the right-hand pane, select 'Enabled' and then pick option 2 or 3 to force Windows to wait for your say so before installing updates.



- 7 Manage updates with MiniTool**
Windows Update MiniTool is a portable app that gives you more control over viewing, managing and hiding updates. It's delivered in a .7z file, which can be extracted using a free program called 7-Zip – download and install it from www.7-zip.org. Once done, browse to <http://bit.ly/winupdmmini> and click the en_wumt.7z icon to save it to your Downloads folder.



- 8 Extract and run**
Open Z-Zip File Manager from 'Start > All Apps > 7-Zip menu'. Click 'Computer', then browse to your Downloads folder (typically C:\Users\<username>\Downloads), select en_wumt.7z and click 'Extract'. Remove the trailing '\en_wumt' from the 'Extract to:' box and click 'OK'. Once the files have been extracted, close 7-Zip and navigate to your Downloads folder in File Explorer.



- 9 Launch app**
Open the en_wumt folder and double-click wumt_x64.exe if you're running the 64-bit version of Windows, or wumt_x86.exe for the 32-bit version to launch the app. You'll see a two-paned window appear with options on the left. Use the annotation on the previous page to help identify key parts of the program, then click the 'Check for updates' button to review available updates.

- 10 Manage and tweak**
Roll your mouse over an update for a more detailed description, or select it and click the 'Update Support URL' to see if a Knowledgebase article can provide more information. You can hide any unwanted non-critical updates from view. Download and install individual updates from here, plus review installed and hidden updates, plus your update history using the controls.

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Learn how to... Get the most from Cortana



Your guide [Nick Peers](#) says...

"Microsoft Cortana promises to help you take control of your life – discover how to set it up so it can do just that with our guide to getting started"

At a glance

Skill level...

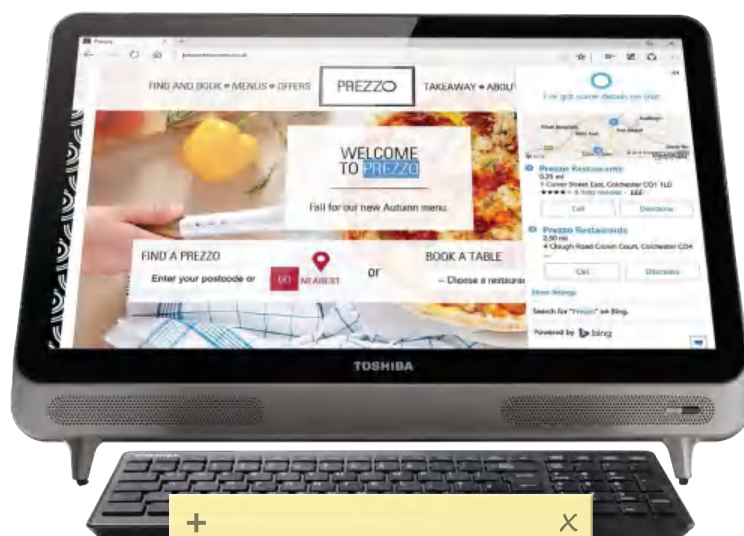
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- Windows 7

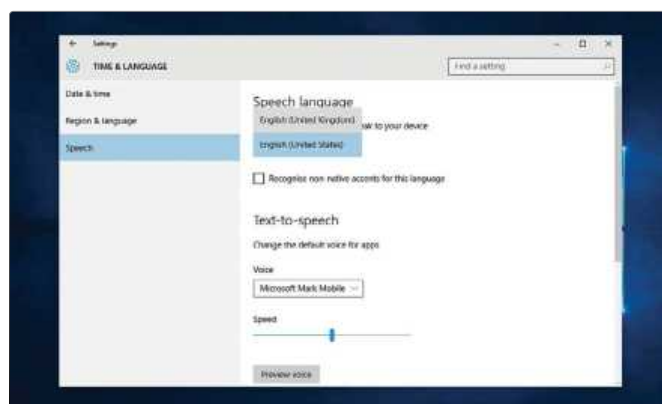
Virtual assistants are all the rage these days. There's Google Now and Apple's Siri, but loudest of the lot is Microsoft's new Cortana. It's built right into Windows 10 (and Microsoft's new Edge browser), ready and waiting to not just help you find things but also provide context-sensitive tools when travelling, entertaining or working.

Cortana learns what you're doing too, so it can better anticipate your needs. Do you regularly travel to and from work with your laptop? Let Cortana know where those places are, and she'll start to look out for traffic news and give you a heads up on when's the best time to leave. You can use her to set up meetings, create reminders and also provide you with tips for your next night out. Here's what you need to do in order to get started...



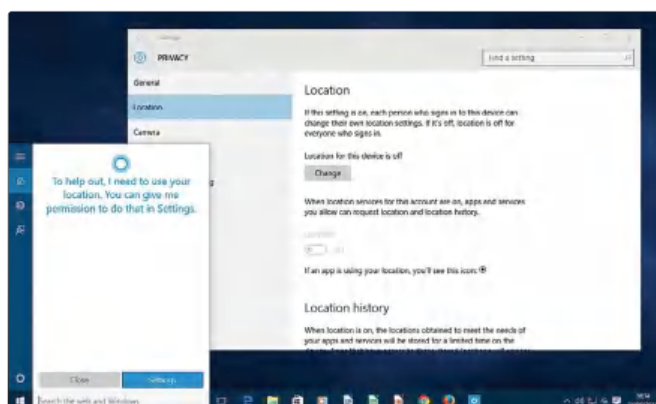
NICK'S BEST TIP
You need a Microsoft Account for Cortana – if you're logged in with a local account you can switch during setup.

Step-by-step | Get Cortana set up and running



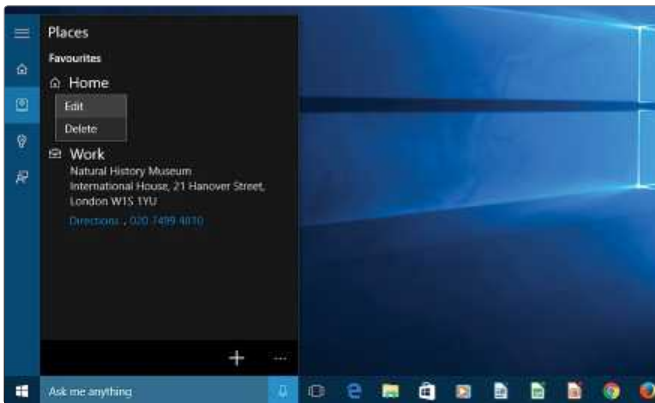
1 Get Cortana working

Click Search and click 'Settings'. If you're told Cortana isn't supported in your region and language, click 'Start > Settings > Time & Language > Region & Language'. Set to English (United Kingdom), click on English under Languages and choose 'Options'. Click Download under 'Speech' – once downloaded, click 'Settings' and select 'English (United Kingdom)'.



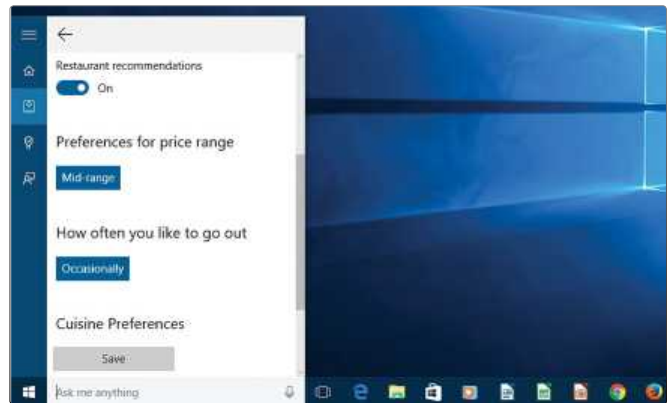
2 Set up Cortana

Now click 'Search > Settings' again and flick the Cortana switch to 'On'. Work through the set-up wizard to configure it. The more features you allow, the better Cortana will be (but at the expense of some of your privacy). Provide your nickname and follow the prompts to settings to switch on the Location service and – if necessary – switch to your Microsoft account.



3 Integration

Cortana will integrate with your location and online services to start providing information such as a local weather forecast. To customise this further, click 'Open Notebook'. Start by clicking 'About me' to set your home, work and other favourite places – if you take your Windows 10 device with you when out and about, this will help Cortana learn your travel and work habits.



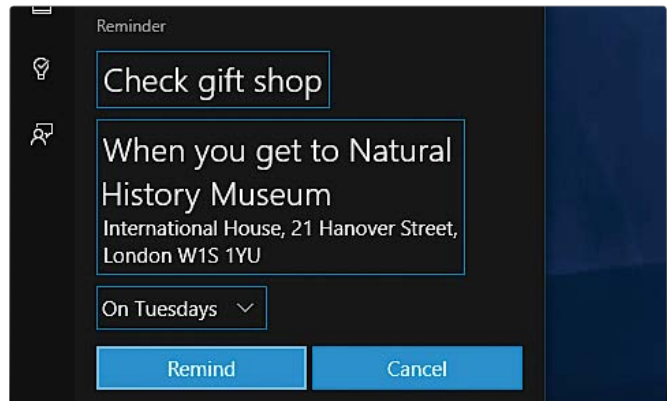
4 Set up notebooks

Notebooks help Cortana learn about you – they contain information about your interests, from news and sport to travel and film, as well as your calendar (which links with the Calendar app and your Outlook.com calendar). From 'Notebooks' click a category to switch it on or off, plus tailor it to your personal needs – for example, price range for food suggestions or news topics.



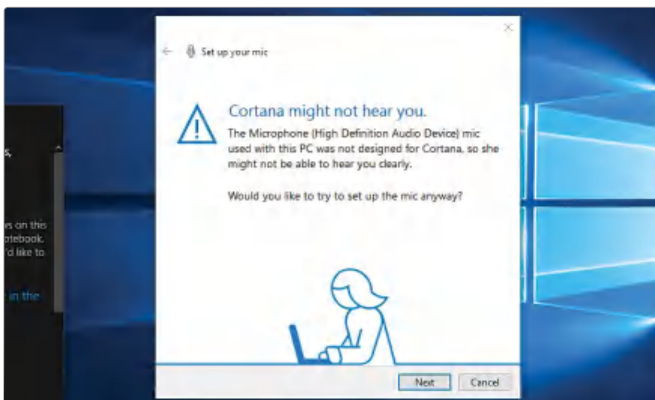
5 Stay in command

You can type commands to Cortana as well as search terms into the 'Ask me anything' box – for example, type 'set up a meeting' and Cortana will ask you for a date, time, subject and calendar (from those accounts linked in to the Calendar app) to store it in. Once added, type 'view calendar' to get an at-a-glance look at any upcoming meetings.



6 Reminders

Click the lightbulb icon to set a reminder. Reminders can be linked to times, places and even people – click the + button to set up a new one, then enter your reminder into the 'Remember to' box. Desktop users will get the most use out of time-based reminders – click 'time', then choose a time followed by day and whether it's repeating.



7 Talk, don't type

If you have a microphone, you can talk to Cortana instead of typing – tap the microphone button and follow the wizard to set up your microphone for the first time. Then open Cortana's settings and flick the 'Hey Cortana' switch to On. Now you can grab Cortana's attention by saying 'Hey Cortana' then speaking your search terms or command, such as 'Create reminder'.



8 Living on the Edge

If you want Cortana to pop up with suggestions while you browse using Microsoft Edge, open the browser and click the menu ('...') button. Select 'Settings > Advanced settings', then scroll down and flick the 'Get Cortana to assist me in Microsoft Edge' switch to 'On'. In addition to suggestions, you can right-click words or phrases in websites and choose 'Ask Cortana' for help.

Learn how to...

Clean up your PC the safe and easy way



Your guide [Ian Evenden](#) says...

"Free download Clean Master can remove caches, backups and all sorts of other files that could be clogging up your PC's disk space"

At a glance

Skill level...

Anyone can do it

► Straightforward

Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

Windows 10

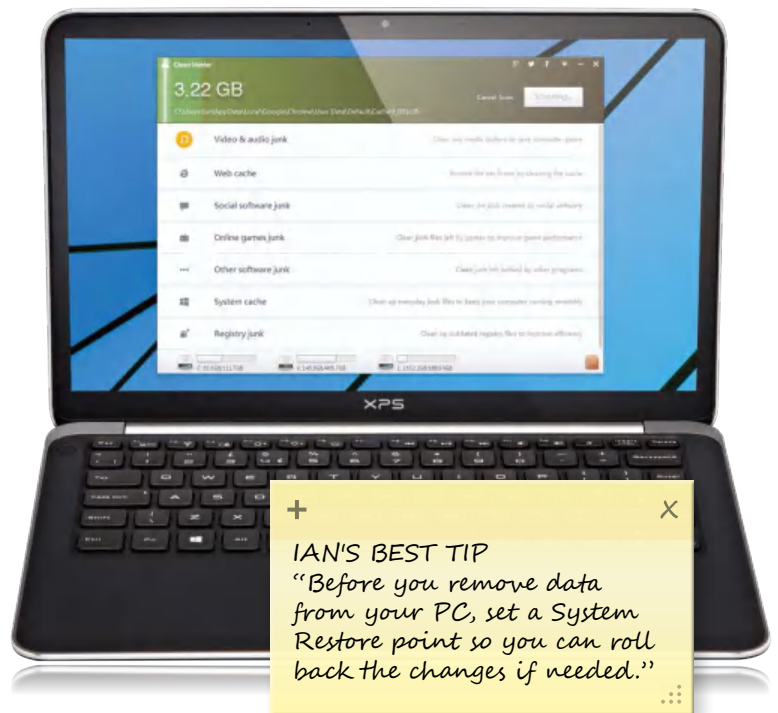
Windows 8.1

Windows 7

The programs we run on our PCs love to use our disk space. They leave behind caches of files, backups of old downloads, working files and folders of data with obscure names that give no hint to their purpose.

Much of the time, this isn't a problem. The programs are designed to work this way, and their data contributes toward their proper functioning. But in these days of small SSDs, especially when used as system drives, every gigabyte can count – and this is where cleaning programs come in.

CCleaner is a popular choice in this area, but here we're going to talk about a relative newcomer to the PC cleaning scene: Clean Master. An offshoot of a popular Android app, Clean Master is a very fast scanner that clearly shows the origins of the files it's removing.

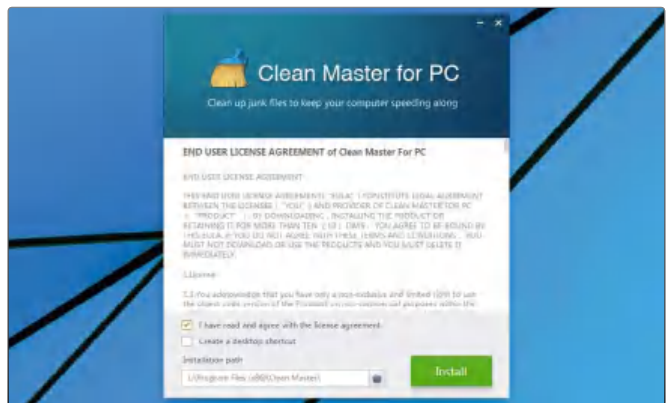


Step-by-step | Clean junk from your PC



1 Install the app

You'll find Clean Master at www.cmcm.com/en-us/clean-master-for-pc. Watch the demonstration video if you like, or dive in and click the Free Download link. It's not a large file, so should download fairly quickly. Run the installer either from your browser or by double-clicking the file in your Downloads folder. You'll have to accept a licence agreement before you install it.



2 Start the initial scan

Once the installation process is finished, run Clean Master and it will immediately scan your computer. This took no time at all on our i7-equipped test PC, but owners of slower machines or those with particularly full hard drives may have to wait a little while as it rifles through your data. Once it's done, you'll be presented with a screen that shows its findings.



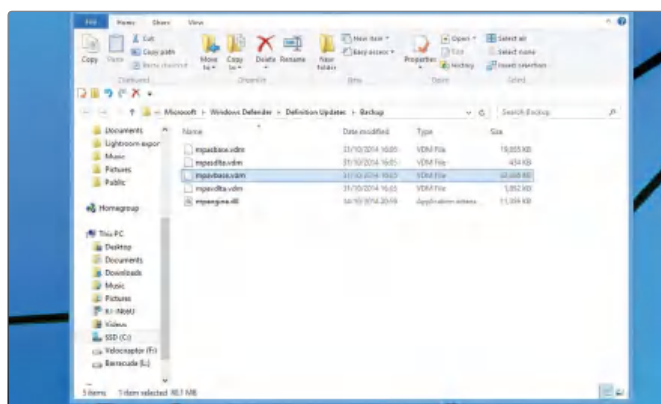
3 Get the results

Our test computer is fairly clean, but the results screen has still managed to find a couple of gigabytes of data it thinks is surplus to requirements. With a 128GB SSD as its boot drive, there's not a lot of space to play with, so it's worth cleaning even that small amount out. Don't be tempted to hit the big green 'Clean Now' button without looking through the data first.



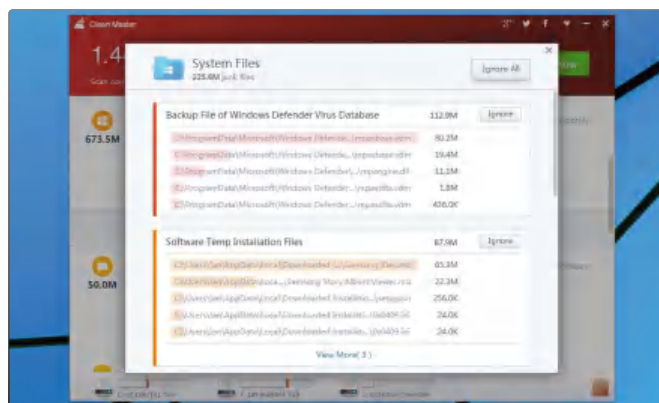
5 Ignore the web cache

Chrome is the main browser on our test PC, so we aren't surprised to see about 500MB of space used by its cache. This will be a mixture of cookies, offline web pages, web app data and files stored by the browser to smooth and speed up its browsing. It's useful, and not huge, so we'll tell Clean Master to ignore it. Click the Chrome icon in Clean Master, then select the Ignore option.



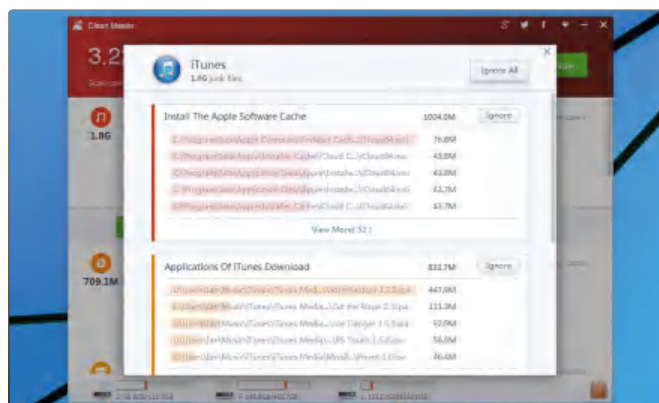
7 Take a closer look

If you're not sure what the files Clean Master wants to delete are, you can look more closely at them using the 'Details' button next to 'Clean' and 'Ignore'. This displays the files as a bar chart, showing you their size, location and what Clean Master thinks they are. Take this further by selecting 'View' from next to any bar. This opens an Explorer window of the folder the files reside in.



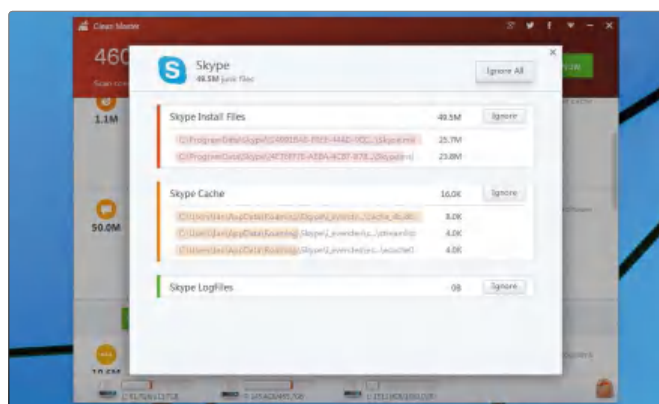
4 Dig deeper

Scrolling through the results, we come across a section marked 'System cache'. Anything marked 'system' should be treated with caution, as although it's unlikely a cleaning application would delete something essential to the running of your PC, you can't be sure. Digging through, we find old Windows Defender update files, and these can be safely removed.



6 iTunes resource hog

The iTunes application is another matter. It's a well-known resource hog, and even though it doesn't get much use on this PC, it has managed to amass a startling 1.8GB of data. Inspecting it shows that most of it seems to be backups from an iPad that's no longer paired with the PC. Cleaning it out is a swift process – select the app you want cleaned, then hit the 'Clean Up' button.



8 Remove installation files

In step 4, we used the Details view to discover that some System data was old Windows Defender files. Doing the same thing to Skype, under the Social Software heading, reveals that the application's installation files are still on the hard drive. We'd like to remove these while leaving the cache, so use View to open an explorer window, and delete the install files manually.

Learn how to...

Rediscover the Control Panel



Your guide [Nick Peers](#) says...

"Discover how to bypass Settings to quickly access key Control Panel applets in Windows 10"

At a glance

Skill level...

- ▶ Anyone can do it
- Straightforward
- Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

- Windows 10
- Windows 8.1
- Windows 7

Despite first appearances, Windows 10 hasn't killed off the Control Panel. Although you're strongly pushed towards the new – and admittedly improved – Settings dialogue first seen in Windows 8, the old Control Panel still lurks behind the scenes, giving you access to just about every system setting imaginable. And while a fair bit of its functionality has now been incorporated into Settings, there are still plenty of times when you'll need to access the Control Panel to tweak certain parts of your PC.

In some cases, direct links to some Control Panel applets can be found in Settings itself – look for references to 'advanced settings' to access them. However, in this tutorial we'll focus on revealing key settings that are hidden behind the scenes – read on to find out more about them, plus gain that all-important access.

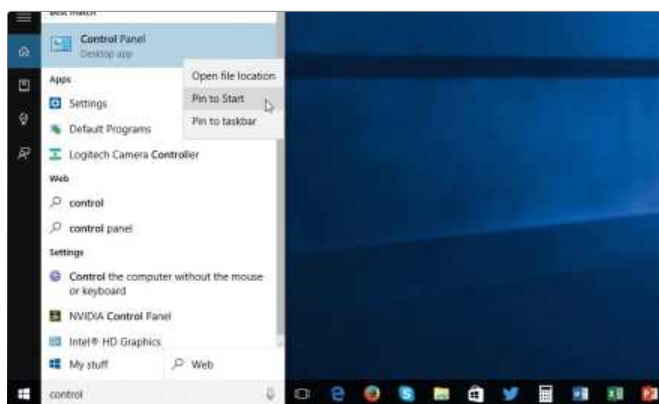
CHOOSE CATEGORY

The various Control Panel applets are split into eight broad categories – click a heading to view all available settings.

QUICK ACCESS

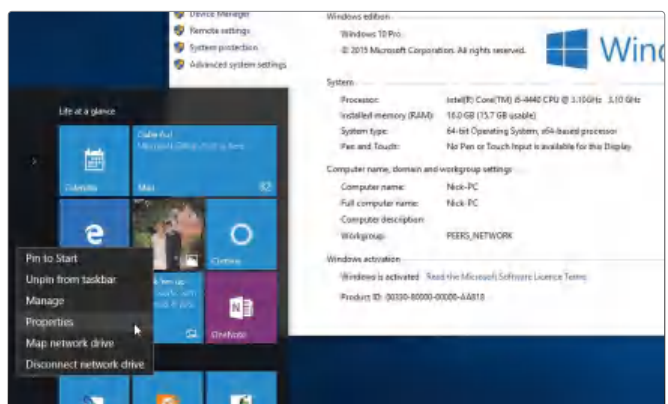
The quickest way to access Control Panel in Windows 10 is to right-click the Start menu and select it from the Quick Access menu.

Step-by-step | How to use Control Panel



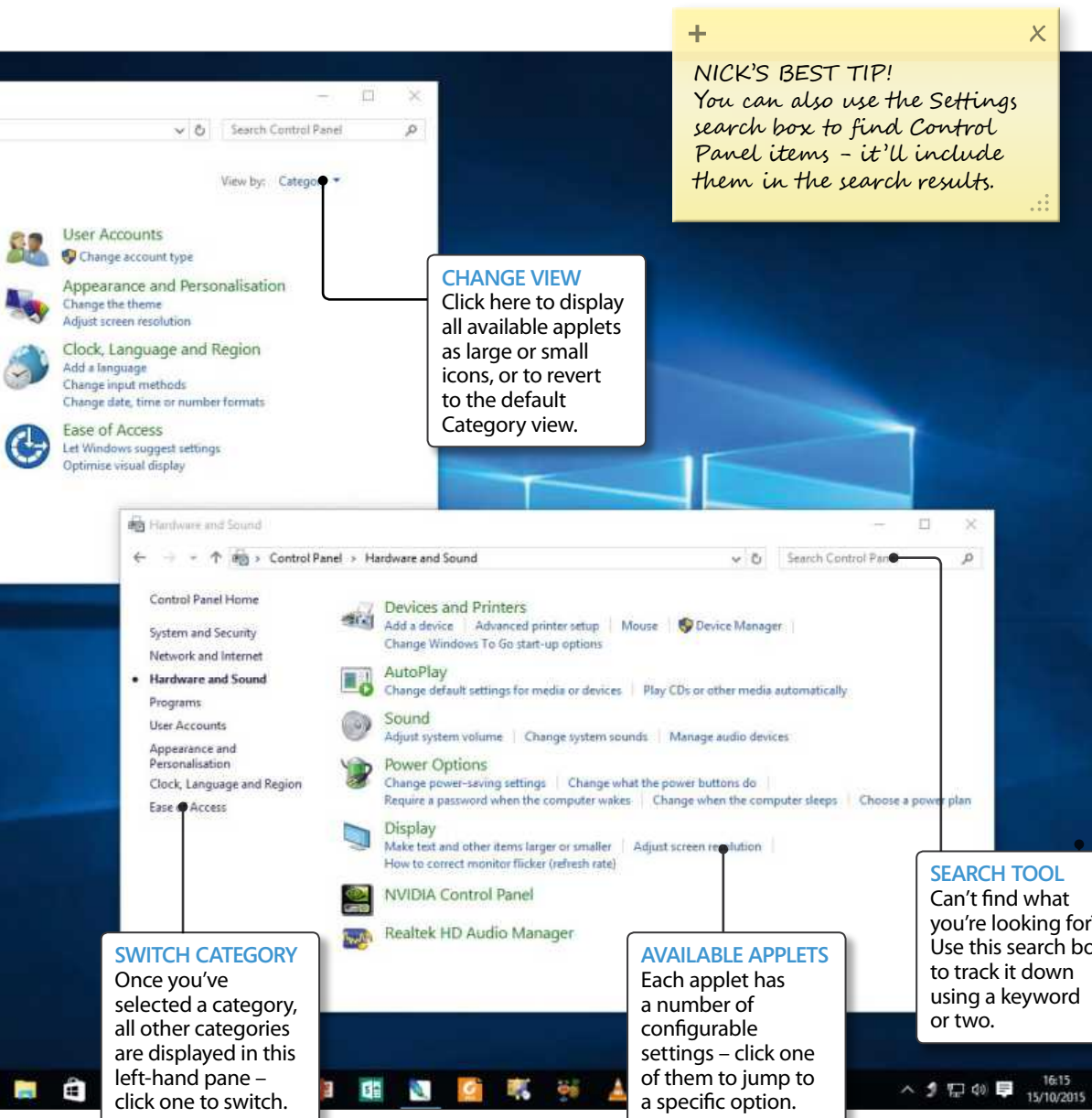
1 Open Control Panel

The quickest way to open the Control Panel is to right-click the Start button and select 'Control Panel' from the Quick Access menu, or make it even more accessible by typing 'control' into the Search box, then right-clicking 'Control Panel' and choosing 'Pin to Start' or 'Pin to Taskbar'. Use the annotation above to help navigate it and find the setting you're looking for.



2 Get system info

The System Control Panel reveals key information about your version of Windows and its system type (32-bit or 64-bit). It can be accessed by right-clicking the Start button and choosing 'System' or by clicking Start, right-clicking File Explorer and choosing Properties. You can also review your current network name and workgroup – click 'Change settings' to edit these.



Jargon buster!

► The Control Panel applet

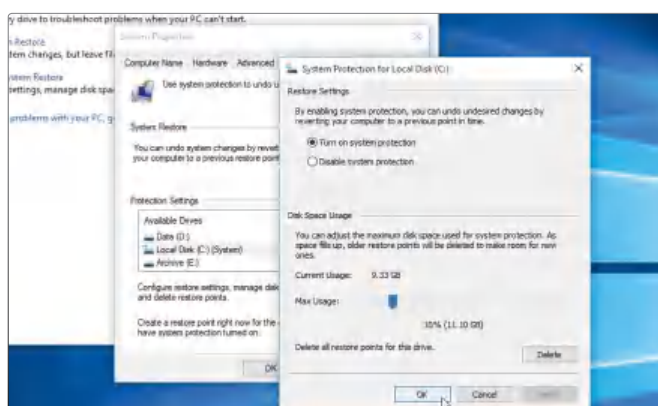
This is a component part of the Control Panel that handles a specific set of helpful options, such as System or User Accounts.

► Quick Access

A streamlined menu that appears when you right-click the Start button or press [Win] + [X]. It was introduced in Windows 8.

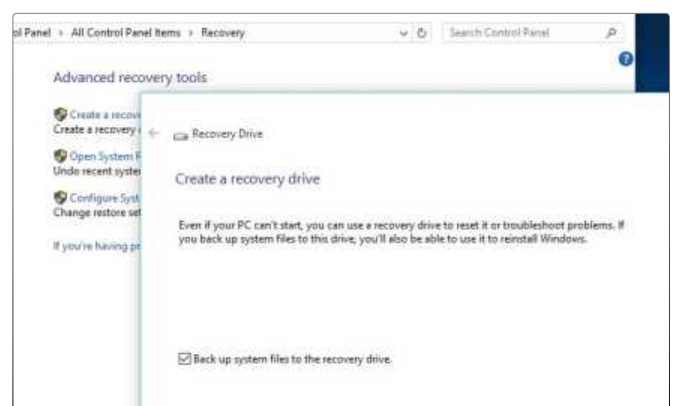
► RAID

A technology that combines two or more physical drives into one virtual drive for data protection, performance improvements or, if you prefer, both.



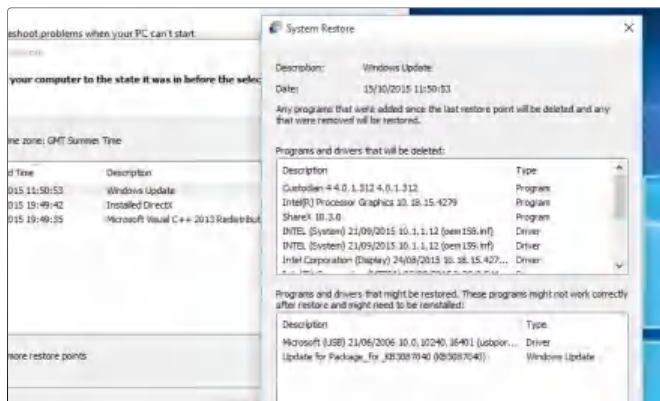
3 Access System Restore

System Restore is switched off by default in Windows 10 – access its settings by clicking 'System Protection' on the System Control Panel or by typing 'recovery' into the Search box and clicking the 'Recovery' entry followed by 'Configure System Restore'. Select your system drive, then click 'Configure'. Switch it on and allocate 5-10% of drive space before clicking OK.

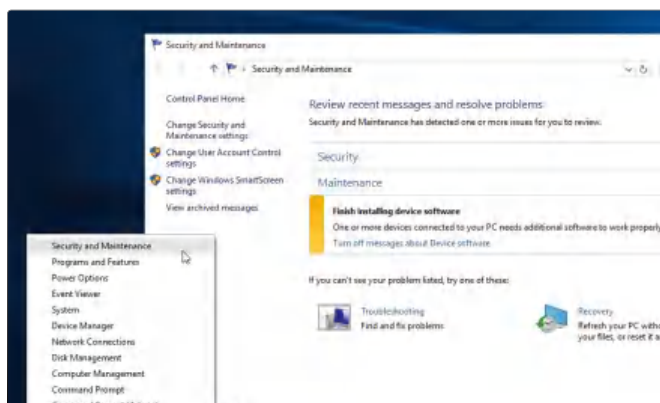


4 Create recovery drive

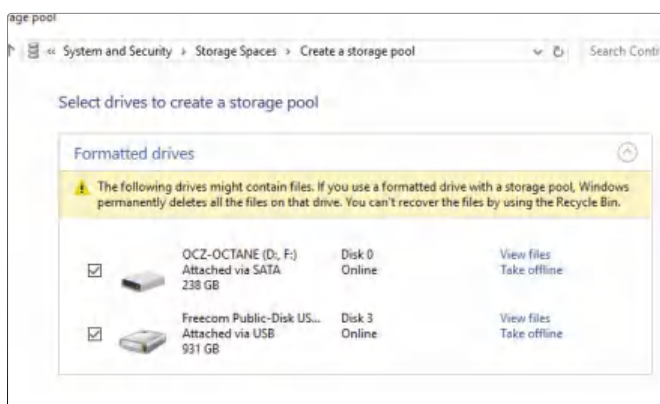
The Recovery applet also allows you to create a recovery drive to help troubleshoot problems when Windows won't boot – leaving 'Back up system files to the recovery drive' ticked means you'll need a larger USB drive, but will be able to reinstall Windows from the drive. However, it won't always work. Leave it unticked to create a basic drive with troubleshooting tools only.



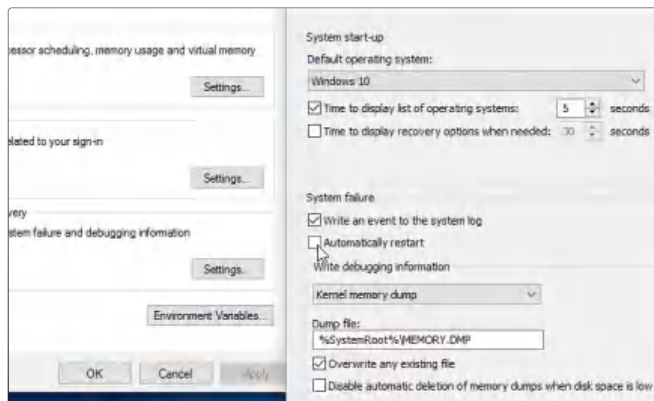
5 Restore PC
System Restore can be opened via the Recovery applet too, which you can use to roll your misbehaving PC back to an earlier point in time. Pick a point, click 'Scan for affected programs' to see what'll be affected, then restore your PC. If it fails, try an earlier Restore point – click the 'Show more Restore Points' to reveal all supported points – or undo the change to try a different tack.



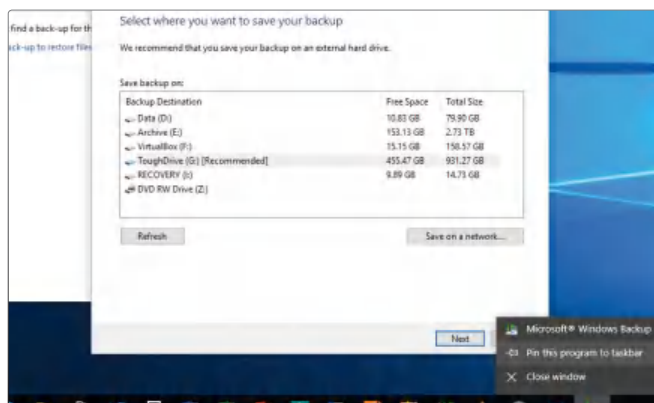
7 Where's the Action Centre?
The Notification Center appears – on the surface – to have superseded the old Action Centre, but in actual fact it's simply been renamed 'Security and Maintenance', and the quickest way to get to it is via the Quick Access menu (right-click the Start button). You'll find it's still the go-to place for security and maintenance messages, as well as accessing troubleshooters.



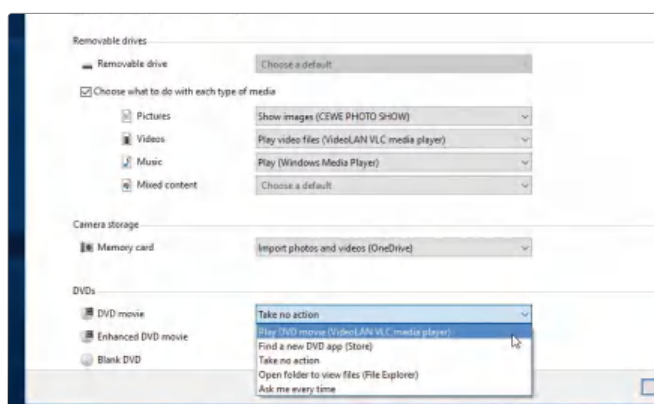
9 Bring drives together
Storage Spaces lets you combine two or more smaller drives into one large virtual drive (or provide protection against data loss without having to set up a RAID array). Type 'storage' into the Search box and click 'Storage Spaces'. Click 'Create a new pool and storage space', select the drives you want to join (read the warning about deleting data), and let Windows do the rest.



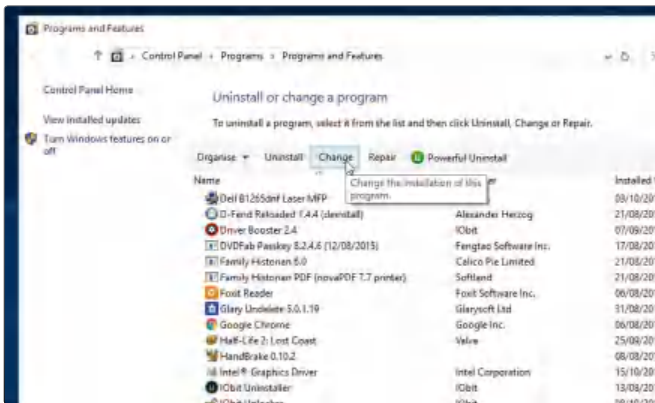
6 Advanced system settings
Access additional system tweaks via the 'Advanced system settings' button under System, or by typing 'advanced' into the Search box. Click 'Settings...' under Performance if your PC is struggling with graphics effects, plus tweak virtual memory settings. Click Settings... under 'Start-up and Recovery' to stop Windows automatically restarting after a blue screen of death.



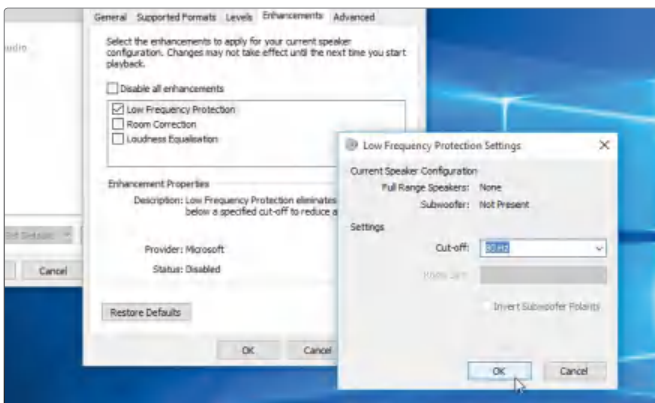
8 Get backed up
While Windows 10 supports Windows 7's Backup feature, it favours File History via the Search box and Settings. If you prefer the older backup tool, type 'Windows 7' into the Search box to access it. Once you've clicked 'Set up back-up' to start it, right-click the Taskbar shortcut and choose 'Pin this program to Taskbar' to give you easy one-click access in future to the tool.



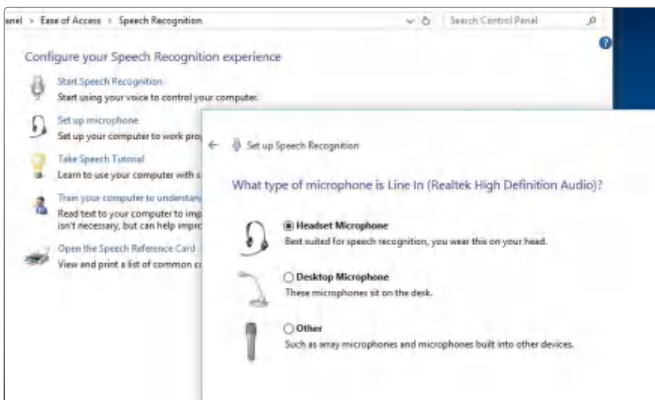
10 Default apps
Type 'default' into the Search box and click the Default Programs shortcut to manage your apps and autoplay settings. Click 'Set Default Programs' to select an app, review what defaults it has and – if necessary – assign it all available defaults to ensure it works correctly. Choose 'Change AutoPlay Settings' to decide what happens when you insert CDs or other media.



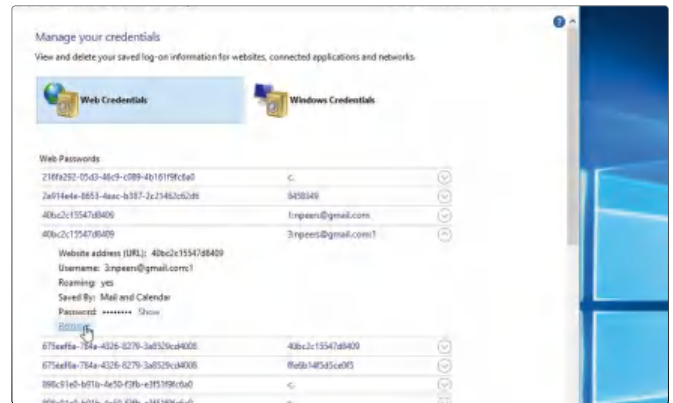
11 Programs and Features Need to repair or make changes to a program rather than simply uninstall it? The Settings app doesn't cut it. Instead, right-click the Start button and choose 'Programs and Features' to access the more powerful Control Panel – you can also manage (and remove) Windows Updates from here, plus switch on (and off) Windows features such as the XPS viewer and services.



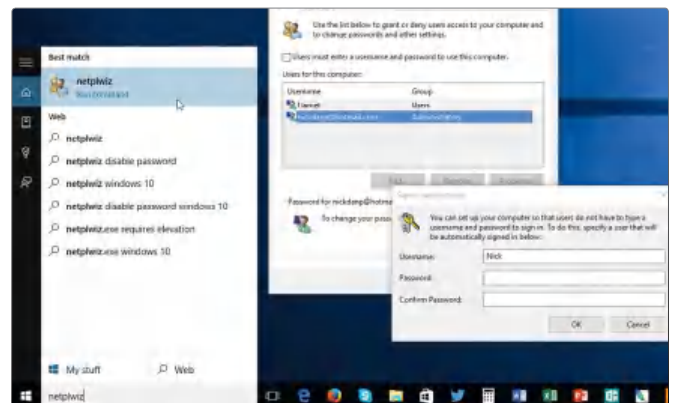
13 Edit audio settings There's no dedicated Sound section in Settings, but the old Control Panel is easily accessible from the Taskbar Notification area – right-click the volume icon and choose Playback to manage default playback (and recording) devices. Select an entry to make it the default, configure speaker settings and tweak advanced properties, such as adjusting sound level and quality.



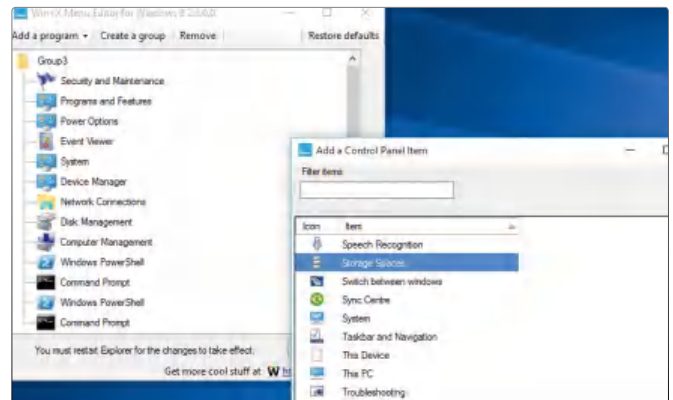
15 Set up speech Type 'speech' into the Search box and click 'Speech Recognition' under Settings – you'll need to provide a headset or mic, then click 'Start Speech Recognition', which will step you through setting up your computer and training Windows to recognise spoken commands. Other options include a training programme to help Windows learn how you speak.



12 Manage credentials Wonder where Windows stores all those passwords it saves automatically? Type 'cred' into the Search box and click 'Credential Manager' to find out. Expand Web Credentials to see which passwords have been saved by Edge, Internet Explorer and other apps (as well as Windows) – expand one to view or remove it, if your user account password as collateral when requested.



14 Bypass login screen Type 'netplwiz' into the Search box and click the entry that appears to access a hidden User Accounts Control Panel. If you're the only user of your PC, you can configure Windows to bypass the lock and login screen by selecting your username, then unticking 'Users must enter a username and password to use this computer'. Click Apply, enter password (carefully!) and click OK.



16 Add permanent shortcuts Finally, add your favourite Control Panel items to the Quick Access menu for quick and easy access. Download Win+X Menu Editor (winaero.com/download.php?view.21), extract the program files and run the x64 (64-bit) or x86 (32-bit) version depending on your Windows system. Choose 'Add a program > Add a Control Panel item' to add any Control Panel applet to the menu. ■

Learn how to... Fix problems with photos



Your guide *Nick Peers* says...

"Discover how to improve imperfect photos with the help of the latest version of Paint.NET"

At a glance...

SKILL LEVEL

- Anyone can do it
- Straightforward
- Tricky in parts

TIME TAKEN

- 30 minutes

SUITABLE FOR

- Windows 10
- Windows 8
- Windows 7

For years, Paint.NET has enjoyed a well-deserved reputation as one of the best free image-editors for your PC, and it's back with a bang with the recently released version 4.0. It's able to take full advantage of your PC's power – its multi-core processor and all of its memory – to deliver better, more responsive editing tools, accompanied by a smattering of new features and redesigned user interface. If you're still running XP or Vista, you can still download the previous version from the www.getpaint.net website.

In this tutorial, we'll run through some of the ways in which you can use its adjustment tools and filters to improve less-than-perfect photos. You'll also discover how to expand Paint.NET's features with the help of third-party plugins, so without further ado, let's breathe new life into apparently ruined snapshots...

TOOL OPTIONS

Here you can see the available options for the currently selected tool. Switch tools using the palette below.

COLOUR PALETTE

Here's where you can set Paint.NET's primary and secondary colours. Click the 'More >>' button to access additional options.

cabin.JPG - paintnet 4.0.3

File Edit View Image Layers Adjustments Effects

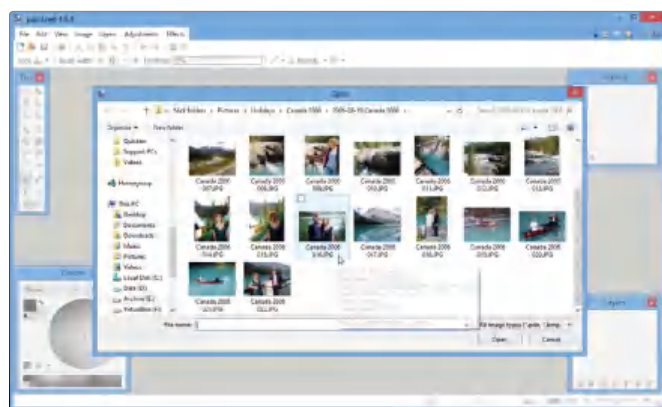
Tool: [brush icon] Brush width: 2 Hardness: 75%

To... [tool palette]

Colors [color palette]

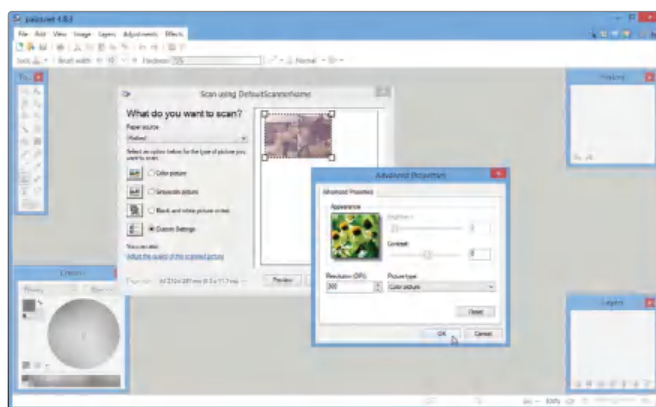
Left click to draw with primary color, right click to draw with secondary color.

Step-by-step | Correct photos using Paint.NET



1 First steps

You'll find the latest version of Paint.NET from www.getpaint.net/index.html, so install it from there. If necessary, the setup program will download and install the necessary .NET Framework 4.5 package. Once installed, launch the program. To make changes to an existing image on your hard drive, open the File menu and select 'Open' to locate and select it.



2 Import photo

Or, choose 'File > Acquire > From scanner or camera' to scan or transfer a photo. If scanning a photo, click the 'Preview' button first, then use the drag handles to frame it correctly if necessary. Click 'Adjust the quality of the scanned picture' for more options – we think the default 200dpi setting is a little low, so consider pushing it up to 300dpi. Click 'OK > Scan'.

SWITCH IMAGES

All open images are displayed as thumbnails at the top of the program window – click one to select it for editing.

TOOL BUTTONS

Click these to show or hide the main floating tools, change Paint.NET's key settings, and access the Help menu.

Jargon buster!

► DLL

A kind of file that adds functionality to the program it's associated with, such as extra effects in Paint.NET.

► Histogram

A tool that is used to display the distribution and density of an image's individual colours as well as its overall mix of dark, light and mid-range tones.

► Layer

These are used to split different parts of an image into individual elements, each of which can be edited separately.

HISTORY WINDOW

This makes it easy to review your changes step-by-step, and undo (or reapply) several edits with just one click.

Layer Properties

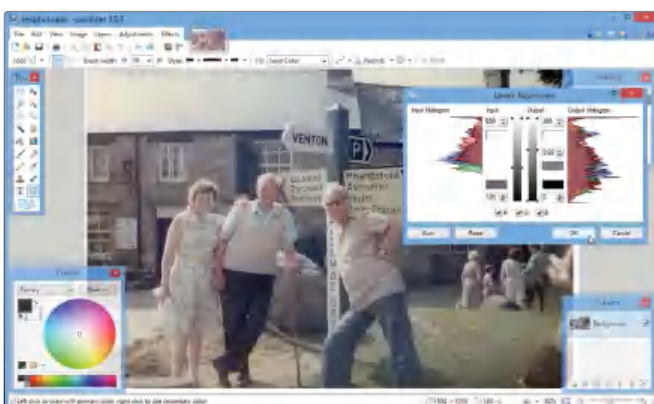
General
Name: Background
☒ Visible
Blending
Mode: Normal
Opacity: 154

OK Cancel

LAYERS

Manage multi-layered images from this window. Click the button in the bottom-right of the window to access Layer Properties.

NICK'S BEST TIP!
Make sure you're happy with your editing before clicking 'Save' – once done, you won't be able to undo any changes.



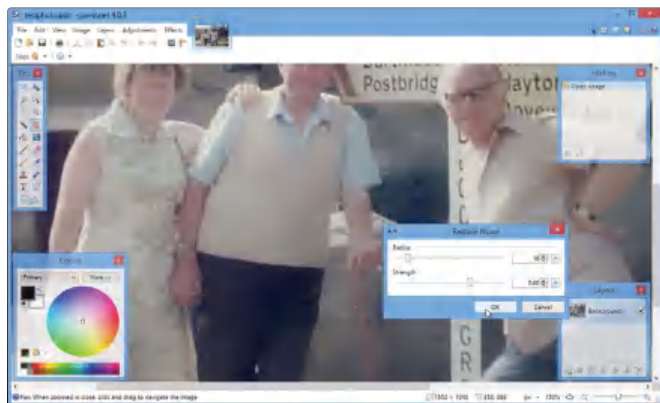
3 Correct lighting issues

Once scanned or imported, save a copy of your image. If it appears too dark or washed out, select 'Adjustments > Levels' to see a pair of **histograms**. Click 'Auto' for a quick fix, then fine-tune the black and white input levels using the sliders on the left to select the range of colours to include. Finally, tweak the white, grey and black points on the right to get the best result. Click 'OK'.

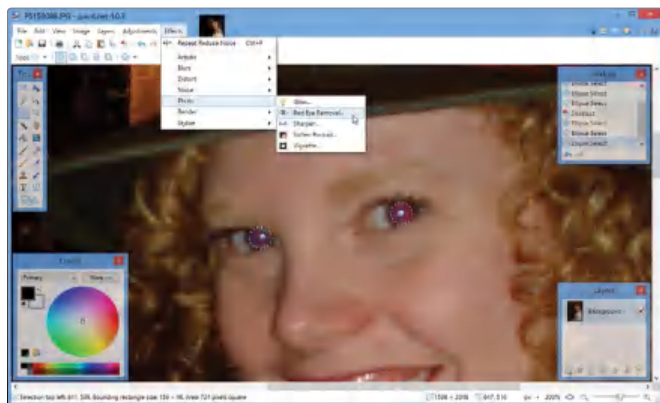


4 Fine-tune colour

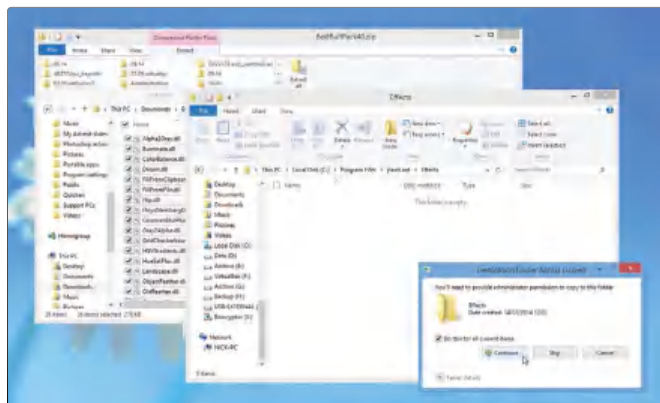
You can use the Levels Adjustment tool to tweak the colour balance too: untick the G and B boxes to adjust the red colour, or tick just G to adjust green, or B to adjust blue. You can also tick two boxes to adjust yellow (R and G), purple (R and B), and aqua (G and B). Once you've selected a colour, experiment with its input and output levels to see how it affects your image.



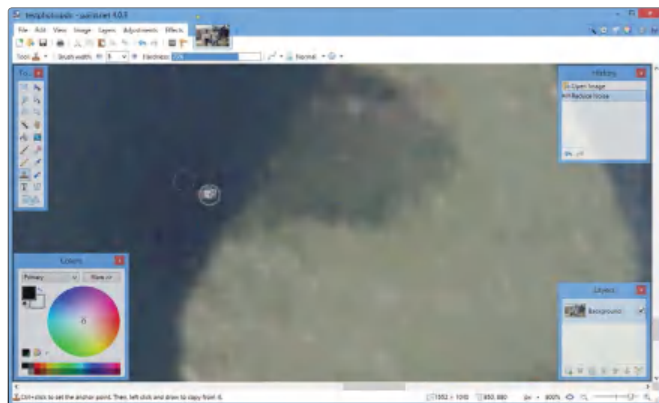
5 Reduce noise
Paint.NET has a number of tools for cleaning up noise, dust and scratches. Start by using the Zoom slider (at the bottom right) together with the Hand tool to get a closer look at a particularly speckled part of the image. Select 'Effects > Reduce noise', then use the Radius and Strength sliders to reduce the effect of the noise without wiping out too much detail. Click 'OK' when done.



7 Apply more fixes
Select 'Effects > Photo', where you'll find five options. Both Sharpen and Red Eye Removal are corrective adjustments. Sharpen can be used to mitigate the effects of blurring. To remove red eye effects, select the elliptical tool and draw a rough circle around the first eye. Now hold [Ctrl] and repeat over the second eye. Finally, choose 'Effects > Photo > Red Eye Removal'.



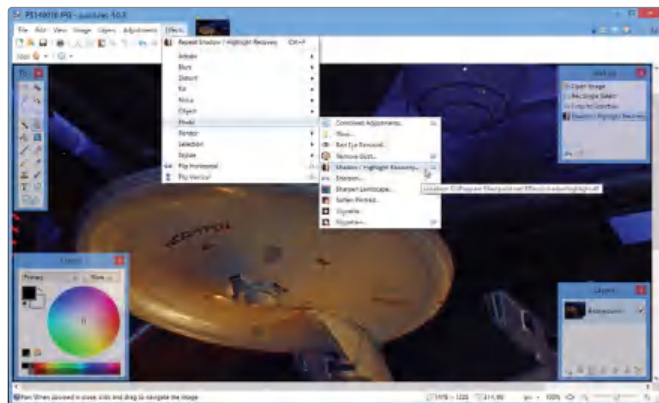
9 Install plugins
Once downloaded, double-click the zip file to open it and you should find one or more DLL files. Now open a separate folder window and browse to C:\Program Files\paint.net\Effects. Copy the DLL files into this directory, ticking 'Do this for all current items' and clicking 'Continue' if prompted for administrator access. Once complete, restart Paint.NET to access your new plugins.



6 Remove larger blemishes
Scratches and larger speckles can be dealt with using the Clone Stamp tool. With the tool selected, set the brush width to just slightly larger than your first blemish. Now choose a similar – but clean – part of the image, hold [Ctrl] and click to select it. Place the brush over the blemish and click it once or twice to cover it up. Repeat for all the blemishes in your image.



8 Get new tools
You can expand Paint.NET's range of adjustment tools and filters with a free third-party plugin. Click the 'Help' button and choose 'Plugins' to visit the Paint.NET forum. Click on a plugin to learn more about it, or try a collection such as BoltBait's Plugin Pack for v4.0. When you've found one you like, click the 'Download' link to save a zip file to your Downloads folder.



10 Access plugins
New plugins should appear in the Adjustments or Effects menu with a jigsaw icon indicating that they're third-party add-ons. Select one to access its features. Check out this month's Support Squad if your security software blocks any plugins, and remove any troublesome or unwanted ones by deleting the DLL file from the C:\Program Files\paint.net\Effects directory.

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AVAILABLE ON YOUR DEVICE NOW

(READ ON YOUR PC AT ZINIO.COM OR PLAY.GOOGLE.COM)



Learn how to... Make Edge work for you



Your guide *Nick Peers* says...

"Discover how to quickly and easily set up Windows 10's shiny new web browser and tweak its settings to suit your needs"

At a glance

Skill level...

▶ Anyone can do it
Straightforward
Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

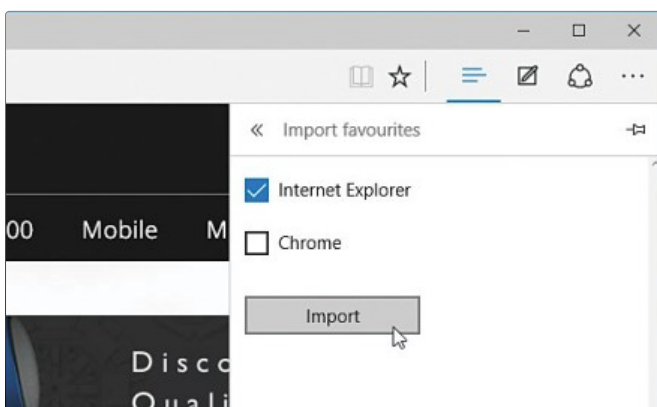
Windows 10
Windows 8.1
Windows 7

Windows 10 sees Microsoft debut a brand new web browser, Edge. It's set up as your default browser from the off, and boasts a slick, minimalist interface while promising to speed up your browsing. But is it set up the way you want it to be out of the box? The answer, sadly, is no, but once you know where to look, you can quickly tailor Edge's settings to fit in with your way of working, not the other way round.

First, let's start by tightening Edge's rather slack privacy settings. Launch the browser, then click the '...' button in the top right-hand corner and choose 'Settings'. Scroll down and click 'View advanced settings'. Make sure the following three switches are all set to 'On': 'Block pop-ups', 'Send Do Not Track requests' and 'Block only third-party cookies'. Done? Good, now let's take a look at the rest of the browser.

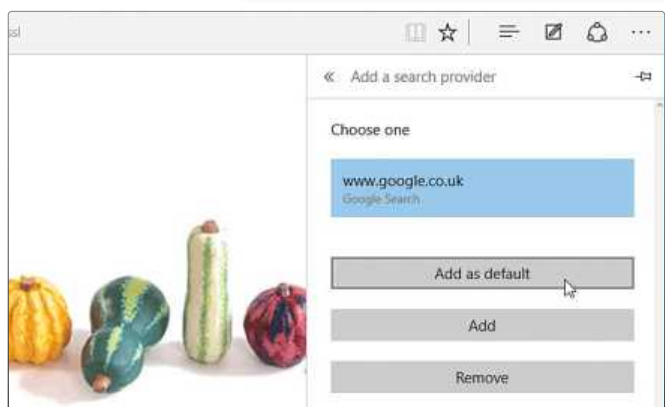


Step-by-step | Customise Microsoft Edge



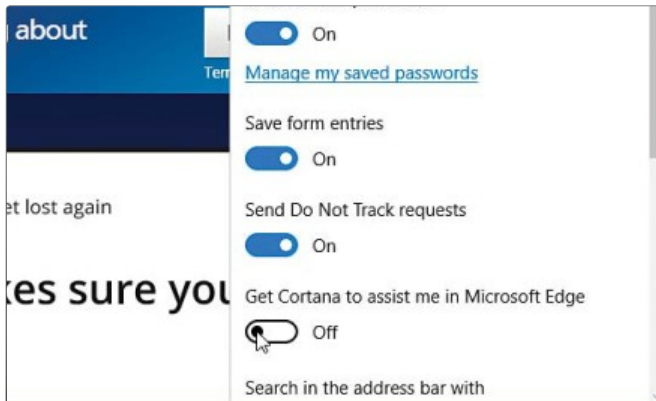
1 Import bookmarks

Edge should be able to import from Internet Explorer, Chrome and Firefox directly (click the Hub button, select 'Favourites' and click 'Import Favourites'), but Firefox doesn't always show up. If this happens, export your bookmarks from Firefox as a HTML file, then import them into Internet Explorer. Import them into Edge using the Internet Explorer option.



2 Change default search engine

When you search in Edge it uses Bing by default, but you can switch to another search engine that supports the OpenSearch standard. Visit the search engine in question – for example, google.co.uk. Then click '...', choose 'Settings > View advanced settings' and click the Bing menu, go to '<Add new>' from the menu. Select your engine and click 'Add as default'.



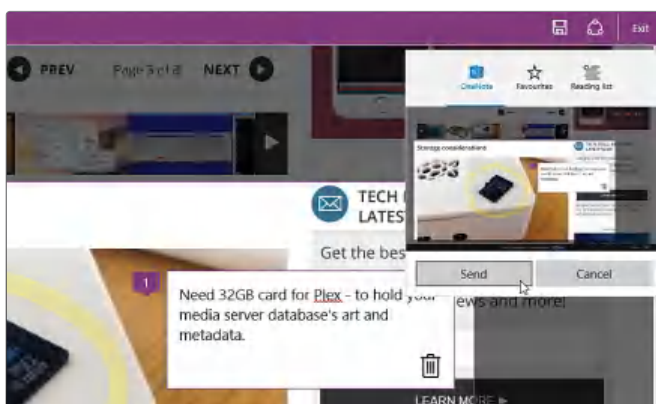
3 Remove Cortana integration

When Cortana is enabled, she's automatically integrated into Edge too, providing suggestions based on your current browsing and searches. If you'd like to disconnect Cortana from Edge without disabling her completely, click the '...' button in Edge and choose 'Settings > View advanced settings'; then flick the 'Get Cortana to assist me in Microsoft Edge' switch to 'Off'.



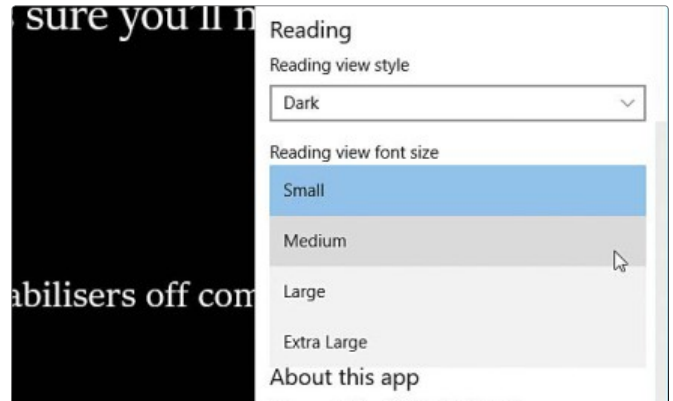
5 Manage your reading list

Edge features a button that allows you to bookmark interesting articles for reading later via the star button on the main toolbar (select 'Reading List', rename it if necessary and click Add). Review your reading list via the hub button – choose 'Reading List' to browse the list, then when you're finished with a specific article, right-click it and choose 'Remove'.



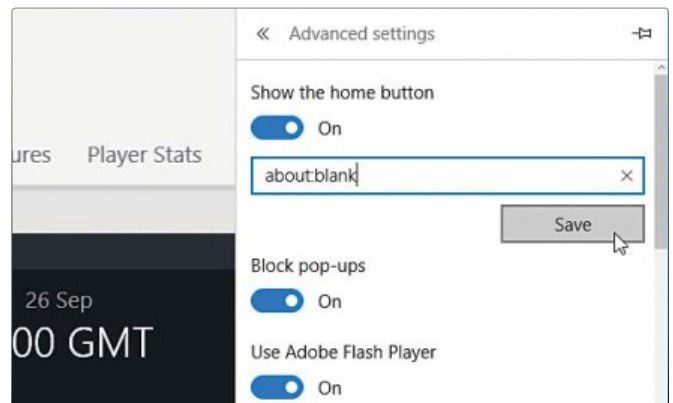
7 Sharing pages

Edge allows you to both annotate and then share web pages with others. Click the 'Web note' button and use the various tools to frame and annotate your page. Once done, click 'Save' to save the note in OneNote or place it in your Favourites or Reading List. Click 'Share' to share it using a supported Store app like Facebook or Twitter, which you should install separately.



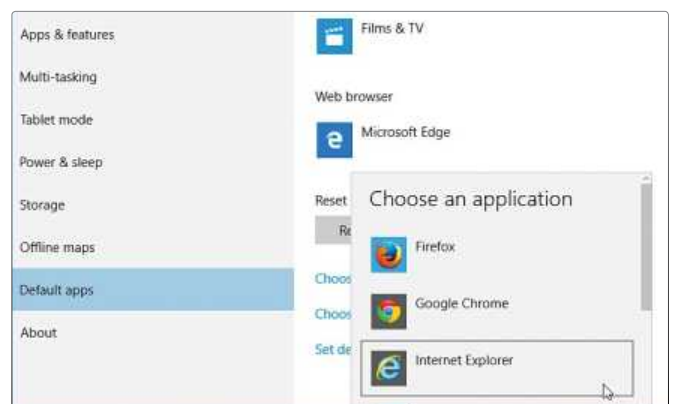
4 Customise Reading View

Edge's distraction-free Reading View displays pages on a pale yellow background with a large, readable font. Want to change this? Click the '...' button, choose 'Settings' and scroll down to the Reading section. Click 'Reading view style' to choose a background colour (light, medium or dark – or white, grey and black) and 'Reading view font size' to select a different sized font.



6 View bookmarks bar and home button

Store frequently accessed bookmarks in the Favourites bar folder, then open Settings and flick the 'Show the favourites bar' switch to On. Restore the Home button by switching 'Show the home button' on at '... > Settings > View advanced settings'. Change 'about:start' to 'about:blank' for a blank page or your desired home page's web address, then click 'Save'.



8 Use Internet Explorer

Edge only supports one plugin – Adobe Flash – so some websites may not work properly. If this is the case, click '...' and choose 'Open with Internet Explorer'. And if you'd rather make IE your default browser click 'Start > Settings > System > Default apps'. Scroll down to Web browser, click 'Microsoft Edge' and choose Internet Explorer (or another installed browser) instead.

Learn how to... Get more from Windows 10



Your guide *Nicholas Odantzi* says...

You can get a lot more from your Windows 10 machine with a few simple tricks – and here they are!

At a glance

Skill level...

- ▶ Anyone can do it
- Straightforward
- Tricky in parts

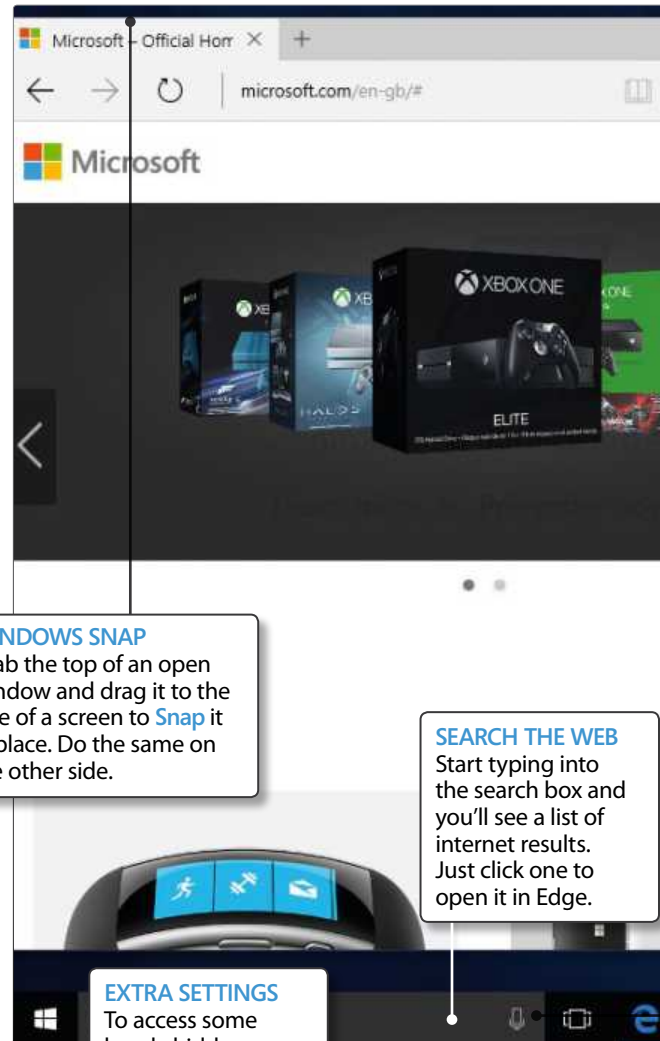
Suitable for...

- Windows 10
- Windows 8.1
- Windows 7

Windows 10 is a powerhouse of an operating system. Simply put, it's Microsoft's best yet, with great new features – some of which you're probably already using every day. Fortunately, there are many other features hidden away. If you're not using these tools you're just scratching the surface of what your computer can do.

For example, did you know that you can do away with a lot of the keyboard and mouse work you're used to, simply by using the super intelligent built-in voice recognition assistant called **Cortana**? This is no Paper Clip 2.0 – Cortana can help you be seriously productive with very little effort on your part.

There are plenty of other hidden secrets too, and some are so simple you'll be kicking yourself you didn't know about them sooner!



WINDOWS SNAP

Grab the top of an open window and drag it to the side of a screen to **Snap** it in place. Do the same on the other side.

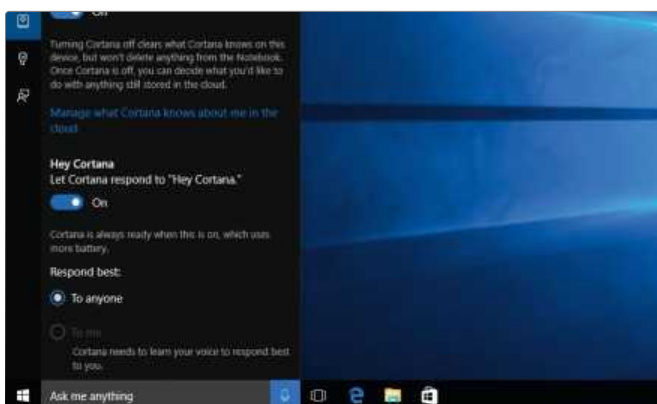
SEARCH THE WEB

Start typing into the search box and you'll see a list of internet results. Just click one to open it in Edge.

EXTRA SETTINGS

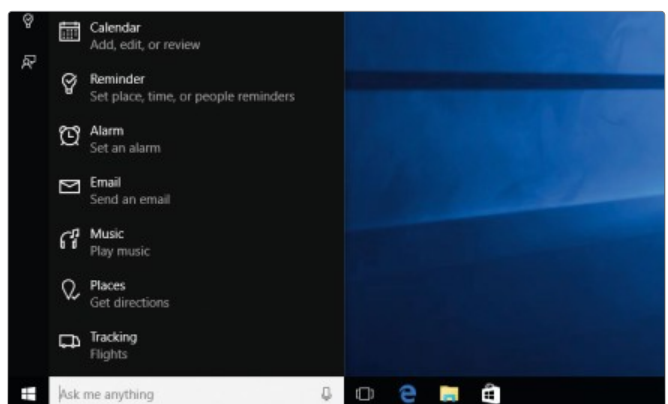
To access some handy hidden settings, right-click the Start button – you can even shut down your PC here.

Step-by-step | Get more from a Windows 10 PC



1 Use your voice to control your PC

The Taskbar searches for things on the internet or your machine. But typing is a nuisance – why not just verbally ask for what you want? Activate Cortana voice control by tapping the mic button in the search box. You can also start it by saying "Hey Cortana". To do this, click inside the search box, hit 'Notebook > Settings' and toggle next to 'Let Cortana respond to Hey Cortana'.



2 Leverage the power of Cortana

Now that you've learnt how to activate Cortana easily, you'll want to find out what you can do with it. One of our favourite commands is to set a reminder for something. For example, launch Cortana and say, "Remind me to buy some milk on [date] at [time]" to set a reminder. Find out what else Cortana can help with simply by saying "Help" when you ask for Cortana next time.

NICK'S BEST TIP!
Play Solitaire! Yep, it's back. Just search for Solitaire in the Taskbar and you'll find the Solitaire Collection.

TASK VIEW
To get an overview of all your open windows, hit the 'Task View' button to the right of the search box.

PIN TO TASKBAR
The Taskbar lets you pin any program or folder to it for handy access – just drag the program icon onto it.

ACTION CENTRE
Click the speech icon on the Taskbar to open the Action Centre and find handy notifications and settings.

ACTION CENTRE
Clear all

Settings

- Restart required for updates. Select this message to schedule. Tue

Security and Maintenance

- Disable applications to help improve performance. You have 3 or more new applications that may affect performance. Tue

Windows Feedback

- How satisfied were you with the experience? Tue

Tablet mode, Connect, Note, All settings, Battery saver, VPN, Bluetooth, 100%, dlink-502C, Quiet hours

Jargon buster!

► Cortana

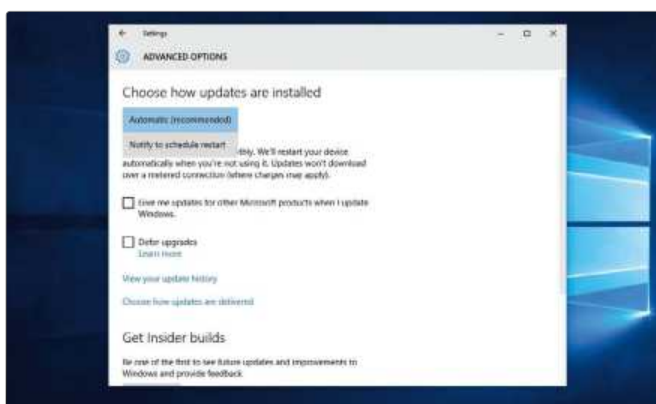
The voice-control software built inside Windows 10, which lets you access functions, provided you have a microphone.

► Run

A simple command prompt built within Windows 10 that allows you to quickly get to certain settings or apps, using key words.

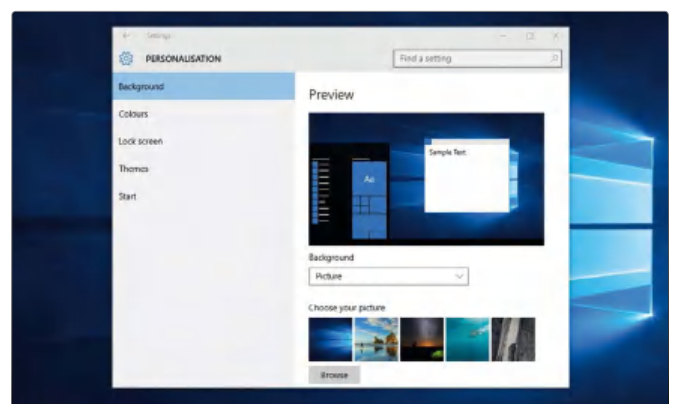
► Snap

A feature that lets you literally snap a window into place on one side of the screen, and the same can be done with one on the other side, too.



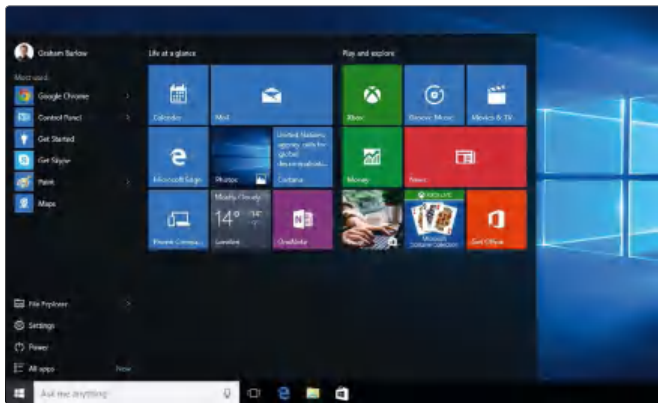
3 Choose when you want to restart

A major Windows 8 irritation was the sudden restarting of your machine after an update – greatly inconvenient if you were in the middle of something. Windows 10 allows you to select when you want your PC to restart. Type 'update' into the search box and select 'Windows Update Settings'. Now choose a restart time. To get a restart notification, go to Advanced options.



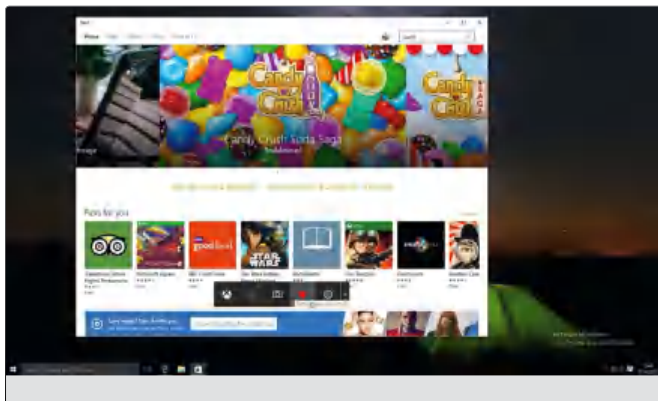
4 Change the way Windows looks

Windows 10 is one of the best-looking operating systems around, but you can make it look just how you like. Right-click the desktop and select 'Personalise'. In the left hand menu you can choose from a variety of visual settings. Choose a different background, change the accent colour, or a different theme, pre-installed or from many available on the Microsoft site.



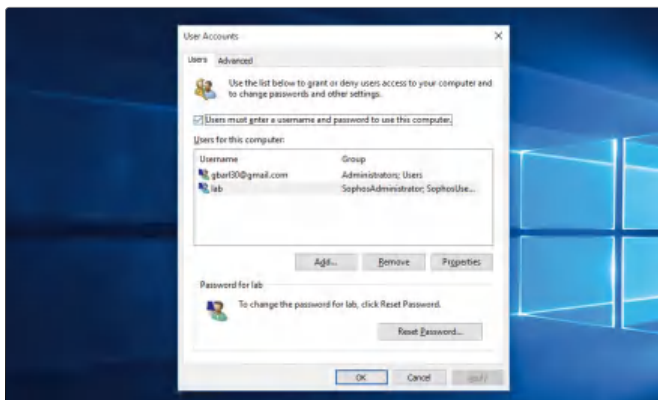
5 Make the Start menu yours

Beyond making the desktop look great, you can also customise the Start menu. Again, go to the Personalisation settings menu (as in the previous step) and click 'Start' in the menu. You can change the way apps appear in the menu, and – most importantly – you can make the Start menu full screen when you click it by toggling 'On' next to 'Use Start full screen'.



7 Record anything

The Game DVR mode allows you to grab videos of your screen while playing a game, or capture videos within any application on screen. So, if you're having a problem and you want to show a friend what's going on, you can easily record it. Just hold the Windows key and press 'G' to bring it up. Then hit the red button to start recording. Do the same to stop it.



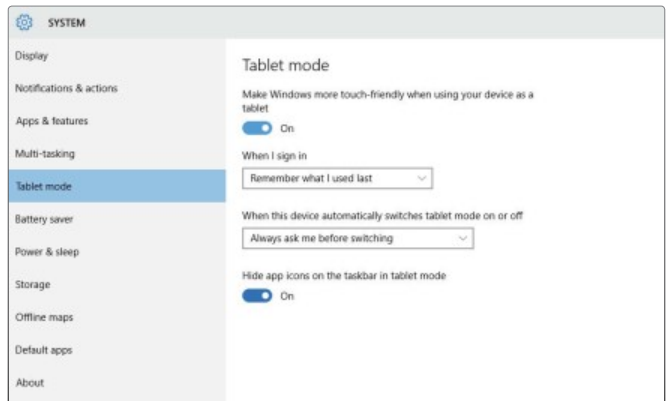
9 Bypass the login screen

The login screen is handy for those wishing to prevent other people from accessing Windows, but if you don't need it, you can get rid of it, allowing quicker desktop access. Right-click the Start button and select 'Run' from the menu that appears. Type 'netplwiz' and hit OK. Uncheck the box where it says 'Users must enter a username and password to use this computer'.



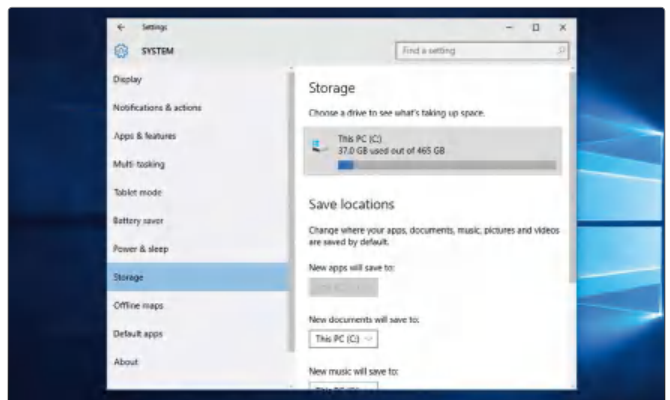
6 Create multiple desktops

You can create multiple, separate work environments. For example, you can have work and play desktops. To create a new desktop, hit the 'Task View' button in the Taskbar and click the 'New desktop' button. When you open a window in an individual desktop, it will only appear there. Hit the 'Task View' button again to explore each desktop.



8 Use Tablet mode

To get a feel for what Windows 10 is like on a tablet, sample Tablet mode on your laptop or desktop PC. Click on the 'Start menu > Settings > System' and select Tablet mode in the left hand menu. Toggle the switch under 'Make Windows more touch-friendly...' to turn it on. For super-quick access to Tablet mode, click the 'Action Centre' icon in the Taskbar and select 'Tablet mode'.



10 Manage your hard drive

Apps, games and large files such as photos can quickly fill up your hard drive. Thankfully, you can see what's taking up the most space and manage it. Open the Start menu, click 'Settings > System' and click 'Storage' in the left-hand menu. Click on your hard drive for a storage overview, and click on each area to see individual programs or files. You can uninstall from there. ■



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Learn how to...

Write your first novel



Your guide *Nick Peers* says...

"Plan your perfect story and then write it with the help of the free yWriter word processor"

At a glance

Skill level...

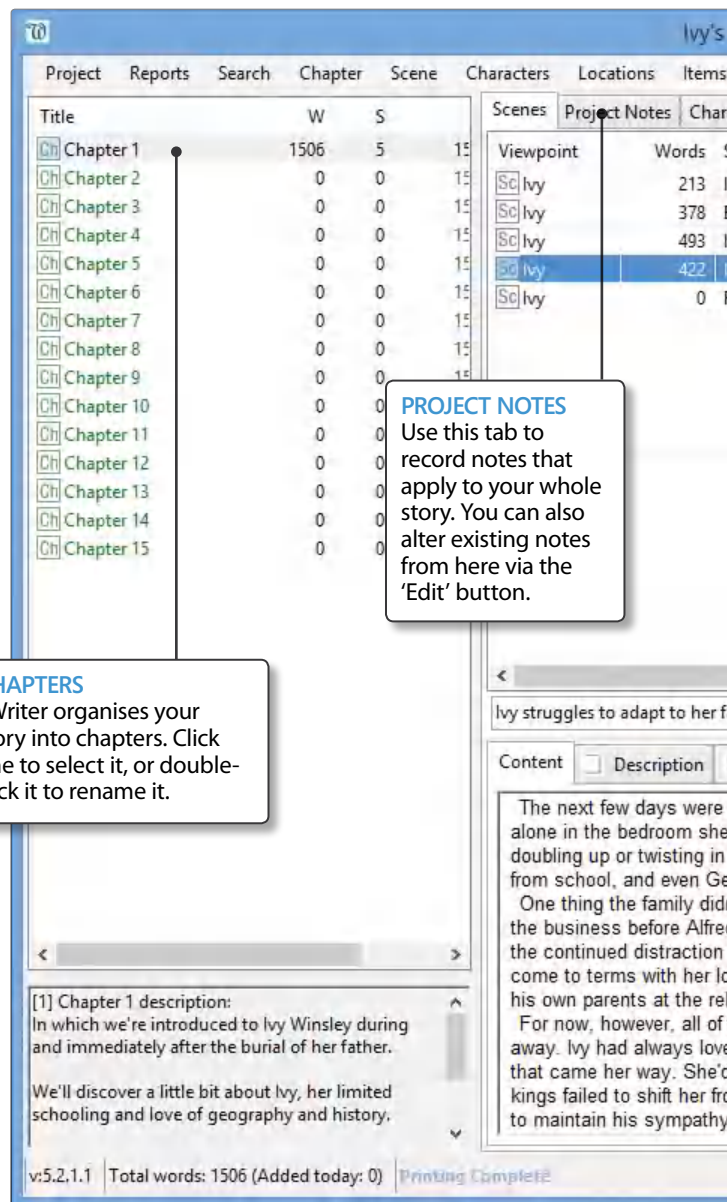
- Anyone can do it
- Straightforward
- Tricky in parts

Suitable for...

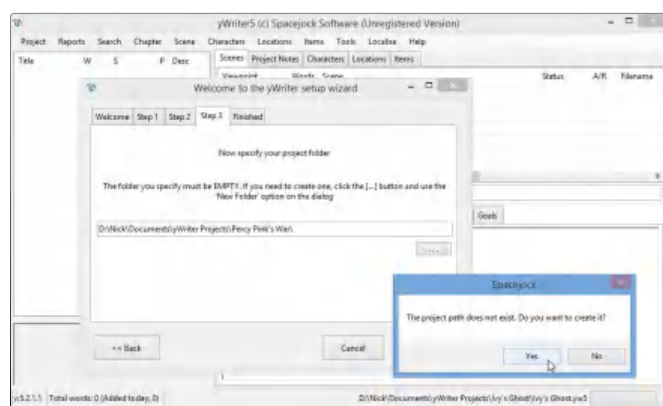
- Windows 10
- Windows 8.1
- Windows 7

When there's a story in your head that you're itching to commit to paper, you need yWriter. This is more than just a simple word processor; it's a fully featured project management tool aimed at budding novelists. It provides everything you need to plot, structure and write your tale, including tools for managing your story's characters, locations and objects, plus a handy set of note-taking features.

yWriter divides your story into chapters, which are split into **scenes**. This lets you break each chapter down into manageable chunks that can then be rearranged at any time. You're then provided with everything you need to write your story, complete with easy access to all that planning material to keep things consistent. All that's left is for you to unleash your inner author. Read on to find out how...

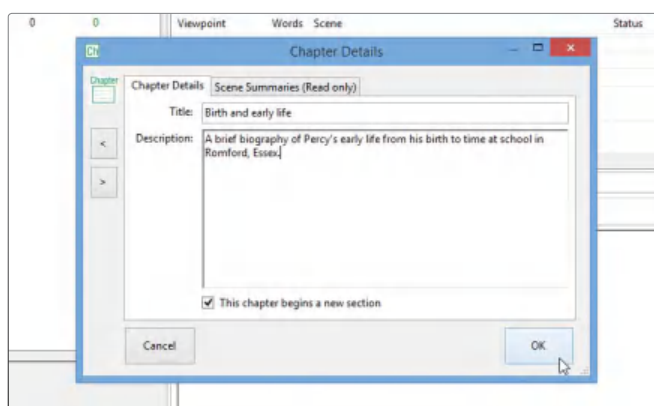


Step-by-step | Plan, write and publish your novel



1 Set up your project

Install yWriter from www.spacejock.com/yWriter5 then launch the program. Open the Project menu and choose 'New Project Wizard'. Click 'Next', then enter your project's title. Click 'Next' and type your own name, then click 'Next' again. Now click the '...' button to pick a suitable folder to save your project to. Once done, click 'Next' followed by 'Yes' to create the folder.



2 Create first chapter

Open the Chapter menu and choose 'Create new chapter'. Change the title from Chapter 1 if required, then provide a brief description of what happens in the chapter. Ignore the Scene Summaries tab – this is read-only and filled automatically when you set up each scene. If your book is going to be split into sections, tick 'This chapter begins a new section' and click 'OK'.

NICK'S BEST TIP!
Check the Reports menu, where you'll find some useful tools to help you plan your time and view your progress.

TOOLS MENU
You'll find some handy project management tools here, including a **storyboard** function and access to previous story **autobackups**.

SCENES
Each chapter is broken down into scenes. The selected chapter's scenes are shown here. Double-click one to edit it.

EDITABLE TABS
All other scene tabs – including Description, Characters, and Scene Notes – can all be edited from the main yWriter screen.

SCENE SUMMARY
The selected scene's content will be shown in this pane – the Content tab is read-only. To edit it, double-click the scene above.

Jargon buster!

► **Autobackup**

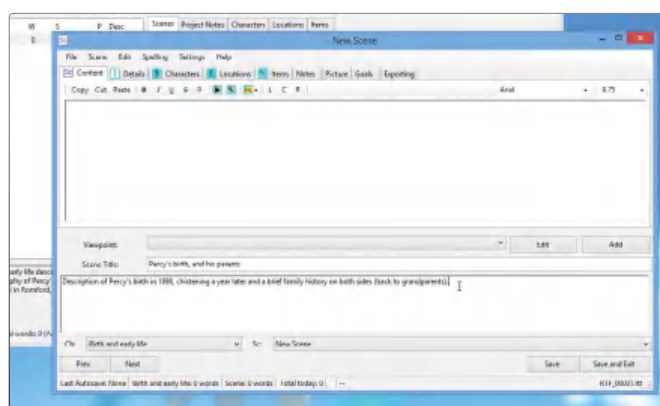
yWriter makes backups of your main project files once a day, but also backs up a scene each time it's opened for editing. Access these via 'Tools > Backups'.

► **Scene**

The basic building blocks of your story, scenes are short passages of text that combine into chapters to form your story's narrative.

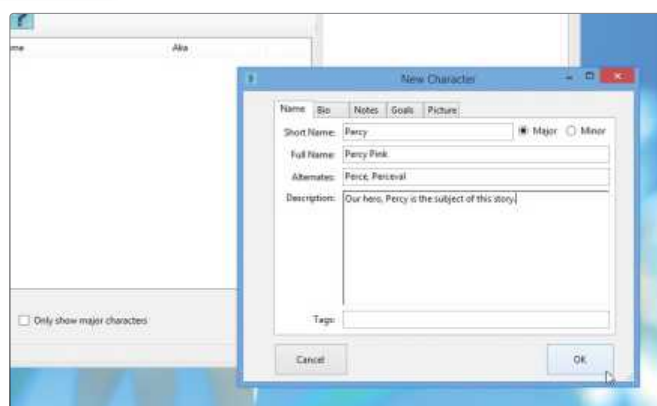
► **Storyboard**

A graphical horizontal timeline view of your novel, organised by chapter, showing each character and the scenes in which they appear.



3 Set the first scene

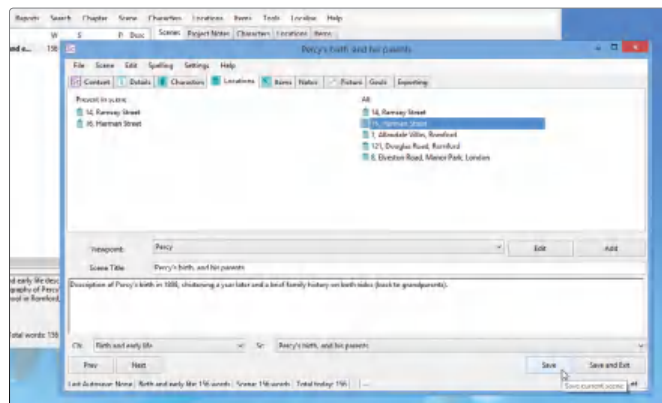
Each chapter is broken down into individual scenes, which split your story into manageable bite-sized pieces that can easily be moved around. Open the Scene menu and choose 'Create New Scene' to open the main Scene editing window. First, choose a suitably descriptive title to help you identify the scene, then add a more detailed description beneath it – typically a brief synopsis.



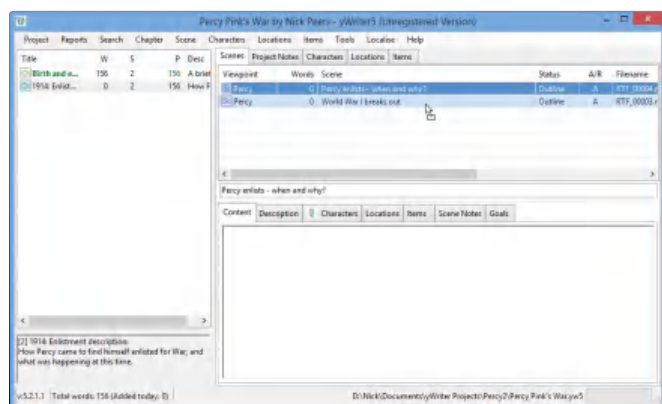
4 Add characters

You'll see a Viewpoint menu above the scene title – this allows you to choose the scene's main protagonist. First, you need to create one or more characters. Click the 'Add' button to the right followed by 'Add new' when the new window appears. Start by giving the character a short name and indicating whether they're minor or major, then fill in the rest of the Name tab.

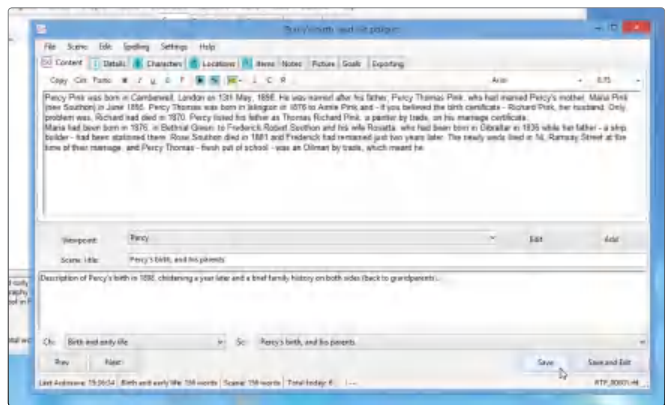
5 If applicable, use the Bio tab to provide your character with a background. The Notes tab lets you record miscellaneous information about them, while the Goals tab lets you specify their motivation. The Picture tab lets you attach an image to the character – not really required unless you’ve based them on a real person and want a visual cue to help you describe them.



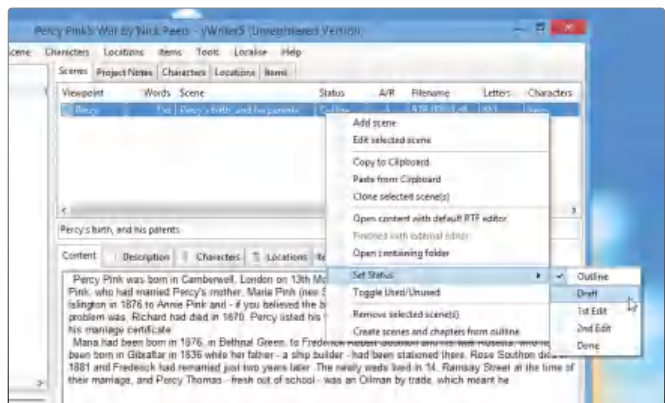
Check out the other tabs: Details records information such as how long the scene is, or whether it's a major plot or subplot. The Locations and Items tabs allow you to attach key places and objects to the scene (right-click under 'Present in Scene' and choose 'New') to help you keep track of what's linked where. There are also tabs for scene-specific notes, photos and goals.



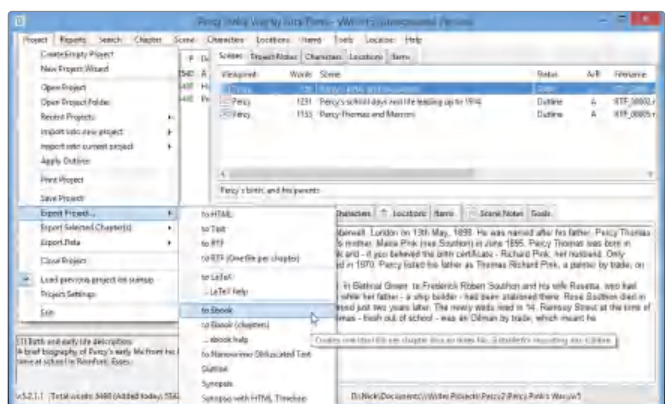
One of yWriter's strengths is the way it allows you to reorder your story – simply drag and drop scenes to move them around, or drag a scene to another chapter to move it to that chapter. Want to split a lengthy scene in two? Easy: simply type a # at the point you wish to break the scene in the Scene Editing window, then choose 'Scene > Split scene on #' to break it up.



6 You can now start typing the scene into the Content tab's text window. You're supplied with some basic formatting tools, including a useful highlighter. Click the 'Save' button regularly to update your work. When you're ready to move on to the next scene in your story, simply select 'Scene > Add Scene (after current)'. You don't need to finish your current scene first.



Click 'Save and Exit' to return to the main screen where you'll see a summary of the work you've done so far. Select a chapter from the left-hand column and all its scenes will appear in the right-hand pane. You'll notice your scenes have a status. This is set to Outline by default, but you can change this by right-clicking the scene and choosing 'Draft', 'Edit 1', 'Edit 2' or 'Done'.



10 Now you have all the tools in place to help you, there's no excuse not to embark on the novel, memoir or travelogue that's been rattling around in the back of your head. yWriter supports multiple projects too, so you can work on more than one story at once. Once it's complete, choose 'Project > Export Project' to save it in your preferred format, including text, ebook and HTML. ■

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Restore, refresh reinstall Windows

Has your PC started behaving strangely or sluggishly? Read on to discover your options for restoring Windows 10 to its best

Windows 10 is pretty bulletproof. However if you are unfortunate enough that something should go wrong with it, what can you do to get your machine

back up and running quickly and easily?

Thankfully the latest version of Windows comes with everything you need to take charge of the situation and fix problems, using a combination of different tools.

In this feature, we'll show you how to make sure your important data is backed up first. Then we'll investigate the various utilities that can bring your device back to life – from a simple rollback of key system files and settings, to a full-blown reinstall of Windows itself. It could be that a simple restore will do the trick instead of a more radical reinstalling of Windows.

Take a backup

Keep your work safe with the File History feature

Taking the steps required to protect your saved files is crucial. Think about the priceless photos, home movies, music library, important work documents and other irreplaceable files and settings that would be lost in the event of a disaster. The good news is that backing up your files couldn't be easier, and the tools you need are provided in Windows 10 itself.

When it comes to backing up your files, the File History tool is your first port of call. To access it, click Start > Settings > Update & security > Backup, then follow the step-by-step guide on page 66 to set it up to work with your backup drive, whether that's an external USB drive, a network share or network attached drive.

By default, the built-in File History tool automatically backs up all the content from your libraries, contacts, favourites, OneDrive folder and desktop. If you want to back up any folders, as well, you can do so by adding them to a library, and you can then choose 'Exclude folders' from File History's 'More options' screen if you want to remove specific folders from the backup.

Earlier versions

Once you've got everything set up, click 'Turn on' (if it's not automatically done for you) and File History not only starts backing up your files, but backs up different versions of them, too, giving you the option to roll back through your files to earlier revisions, which can be really useful.

There are two ways to recover your files. Firstly, if you want to restore lost or accidentally deleted files, click 'Restore files from a current backup' in the 'More options' section of File History. From here, you can browse your backups by location or library, or search for specific content.

It's just as simple to restore an earlier version of a file. Browse for it in an Explorer window, select the file in question and click the 'History' button on the Home tab of the ribbon to see a list of previous versions of the file, before restoring the one you want.

When it comes to backing up other key settings and files, the guide opposite has all the tips, tools and tricks to keep all aspects of your PC safe.

"Backing up your files couldn't be easier and the tools you need are provided in Windows 10 itself"

Back up your files online

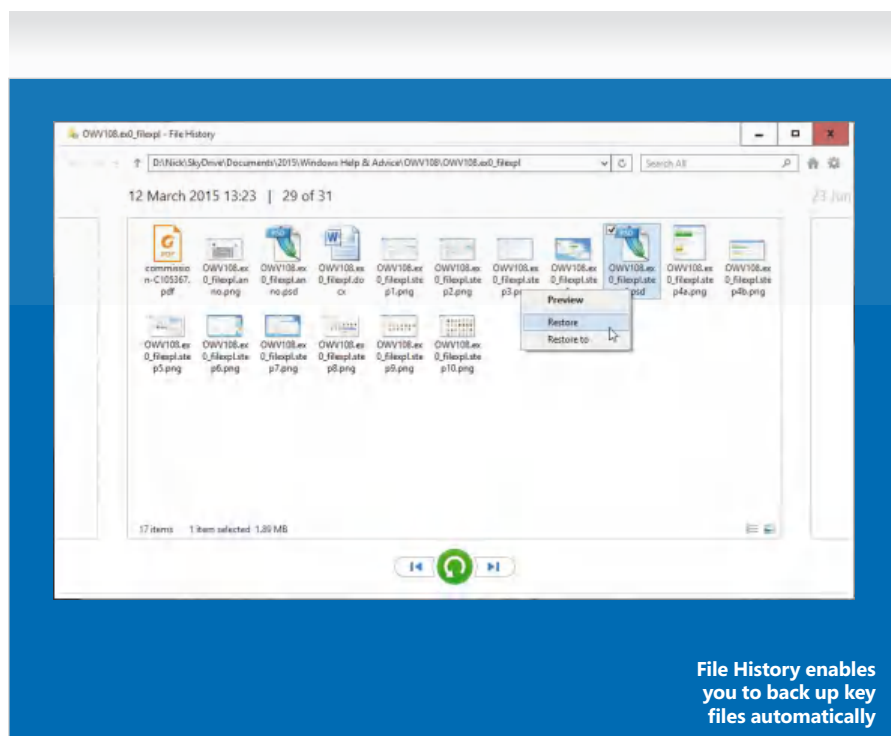
Add an extra layer to your emergency recovery plan

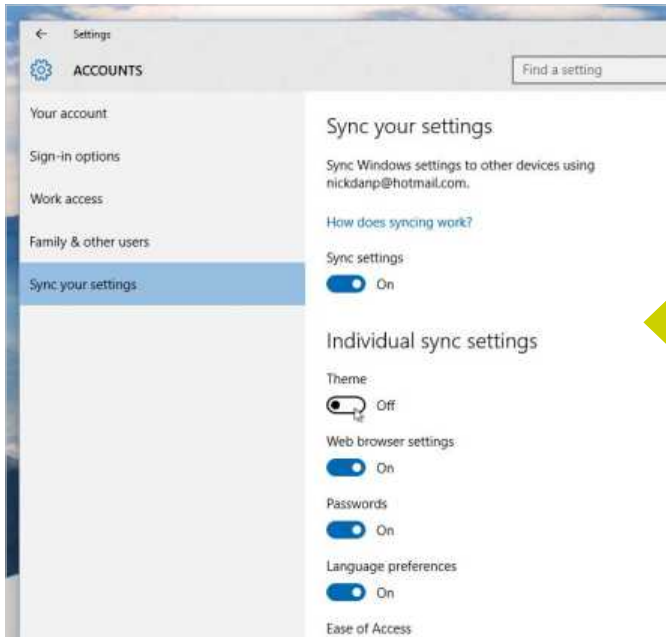
As anyone who's experienced a hardware failure will know, you can never have too many backups. So even after using File History to back up your files, you should explore another option, just in case.

We recommend using an online backup, because it means there's a copy of your files stored in a separate physical location for your extra protection.

The obvious choice for Windows 10 users is to use the free OneDrive desktop app, which enables you to sync up to 35GB of files to the cloud for absolutely nothing. You'll find it on your Start screen – just click (or tap) on the OneDrive title to launch it.

If you need more storage space, you can purchase additional gigabytes in the 'Manage storage > Upgrade' area of OneDrive online. The 100GB plan is £1.99 per month, or you can get 200GB for £3.99 a month. Pay £5.99 a month, however, and you'll get Office 365 plus a whopping 1TB of storage too.





Back up your settings

Use Windows 10's Sync Your Settings tool for extra protection if disaster strikes

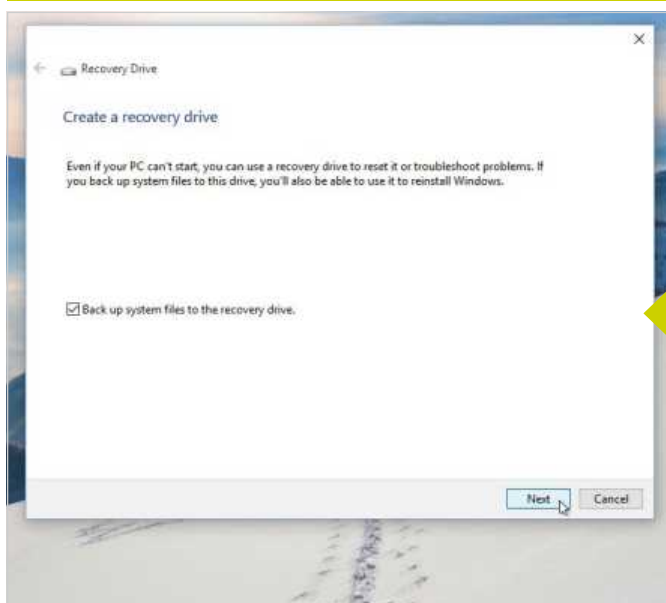
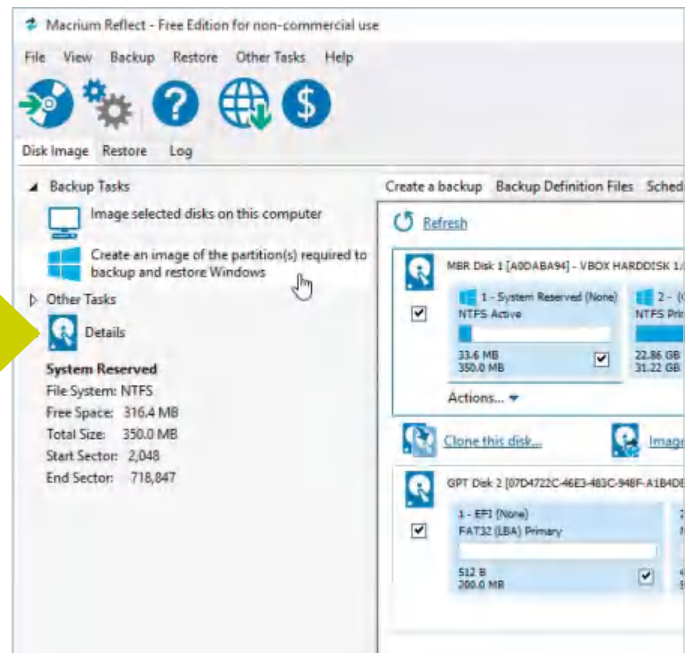
If you log on to your Windows 10 PC using your Microsoft account, you can take advantage of Windows' built-in Sync Your Settings feature. Although this tool is designed to synchronise personal settings across your Windows devices, it also serves as a backup for key preferences so you don't have to set them up again should disaster strike. Make sure 'Sync Your Settings' is on and choose the settings you wish to back up – to do this open Settings from the Start menu, select 'Accounts' followed by 'Sync your settings'. You'll find switches to turn the feature on and off, and you can also exclude settings from the backup, such as passwords or browser settings.

Take a drive image

Make a complete backup of your computer's hard drive with Macrium Reflect Free

Having a backup of your entire system enables you to quickly restore your PC to exactly how it once was. Windows 10 has a built-in drive image tool, but you can get better, more efficient results with Macrium Reflect Free. Download it at www.macrium.com/reflectfree.aspx.

There are two basic back-up options, but we're going to choose 'Create an image of the partition(s) required to backup and restore Windows'. Make sure the correct drives have been selected, then click the '...' button next to 'Folder' to select a location on your back-up drive. Finally, click 'Finish > OK' and the backup will be created. Once complete, check that the backup is not corrupt by switching to the Restore tab and clicking 'Verify image' next to it. Finally, select 'Other tasks > Create rescue media' to create a Macrium recovery disc or USB drive.



Create rescue media

Taking a few minutes to make a recovery USB drive could save you hassle in the future

A recovery USB flash drive lets you access essential repair and recovery options that can save the day if your PC or tablet fails to boot. If your Windows 8.1 device has a recovery partition, you can store that on the drive, too. A basic recovery drive without a recovery partition requires a 256MB USB flash drive, but you'll need a drive at least 4GB in size if you plan to make a backup of the recovery partition, too (which is recommended).

To create the drive, plug in your USB flash drive, then type the word **recovery** into the search box. Select the 'Create a recovery drive' option under 'Settings', then follow the prompts to create your recovery stick. After the process has finished, select the option to delete the recovery partition only if you're low on storage space.

Restore or roll back your PC

If the problem with your device is only relatively minor, then you can often fix it without affecting your data

Your PC has run into problems and you have exhausted all the obvious troubleshooting angles. So what can you do to try to get things working properly again?

The next step in Windows 10, like earlier versions of Windows, is to investigate the System Restore tool. System Restore works in a similar way to File History, only it affects system and program files instead of your personal data. Snapshots of these files,

you can perform a more radical step: go back to the previous build of Windows 10.

When you perform a major update of Windows, or Windows 10 installs a major new version, it creates a backup of the previous build, just in case you run into any problems. This backup is stored in the 'Windows.old' folder – it can take up a fair bit of space, and can be removed using Disk Cleanup. But if you have the spare capacity, leave it in place in case you ever need to use it to fix a problem.

You'll then be asked to give a reason for why you're rolling back Windows – this helps highlight issues that may require an urgent fix.

You'll then be given a brief summary of the changes being made (no specific details are available, unlike with System Restore, sadly), with a prompt to back up for safety's sake (if File History is turned on, you're probably covered). Click Next, make a note of the warning about your logon password and then click Next again, sit back and wait while your PC is restored.

If all goes well, you should have a working version of Windows 10 again, with just a few maintenance tasks to perform (reinstalling programs, updating settings, and so on) before everything's back to normal.

"If System Restore doesn't fix the problem you can perform a more radical step: roll back your PC"

known as Restore Points, are taken at key moments during general use, and if you run into problems, you can try rolling back to a previous Restore Point to see if it fixes the problem.

System Restore

System Restore usually works best when your problem has been caused by a recent change to your computer, typically through installing or updating new hardware, software or Windows itself. The step-by-step guide opposite reveals how to access and use System Restore, either from within Windows or via your computer's recovery menu.

If System Restore doesn't do enough to fix the problem, then

Rolling back your system in this way works in a similar fashion to System Restore: your data is unaffected, but any changes made since the new build was installed, like changes to settings or programs, newly installed apps and so on, will be undone.

If you need to use the rollback feature, and Windows is working well enough for you to access it normally, open Settings before selecting 'Update & security' followed by 'Go back to an earlier build'. If Windows won't boot, use your recovery drive or select 'Troubleshoot > Advanced options' to access the option.

You'll see a message telling you Windows is getting things ready.

Beyond a rollback

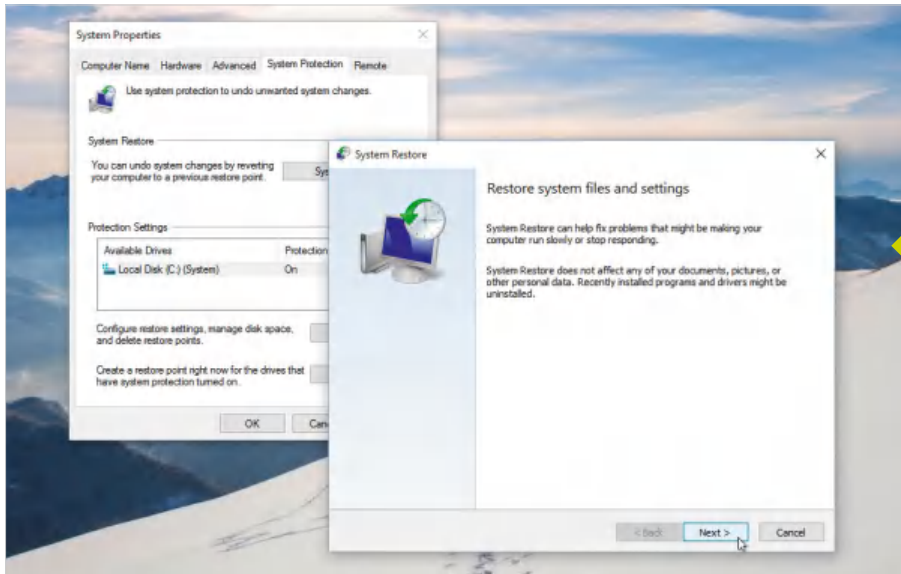
Unfortunately, rolling back your PC to the previous version of Windows 10 won't always cure all issues. You may find your device still doesn't function as it should after you've refreshed it, or the procedure might not work. If Windows comes across a problem, it'll inform you of the fact, try to resolve it and then, if the fix fails, undo all the changes it's made, leaving you back where you started.

If all else fails, fixing your PC will involve something more drastic: a complete wipe and reinstall of Windows itself in what is now termed a 'reset' of your PC. The good news is that you can perform this action without losing your data or by wiping the drive entirely. However the end result is the same: you'll lose all your settings and apps.

System Restore

For when things go wrong

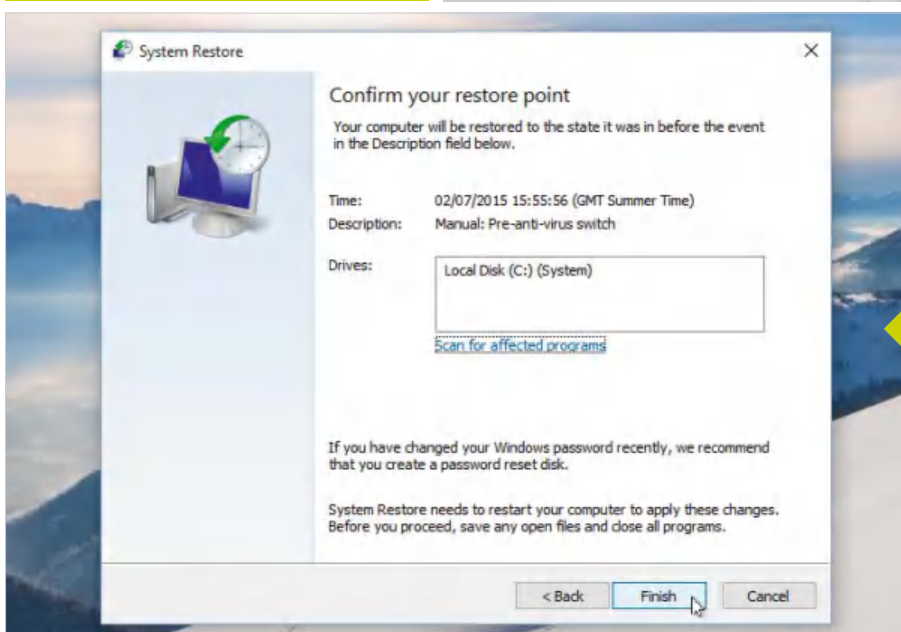
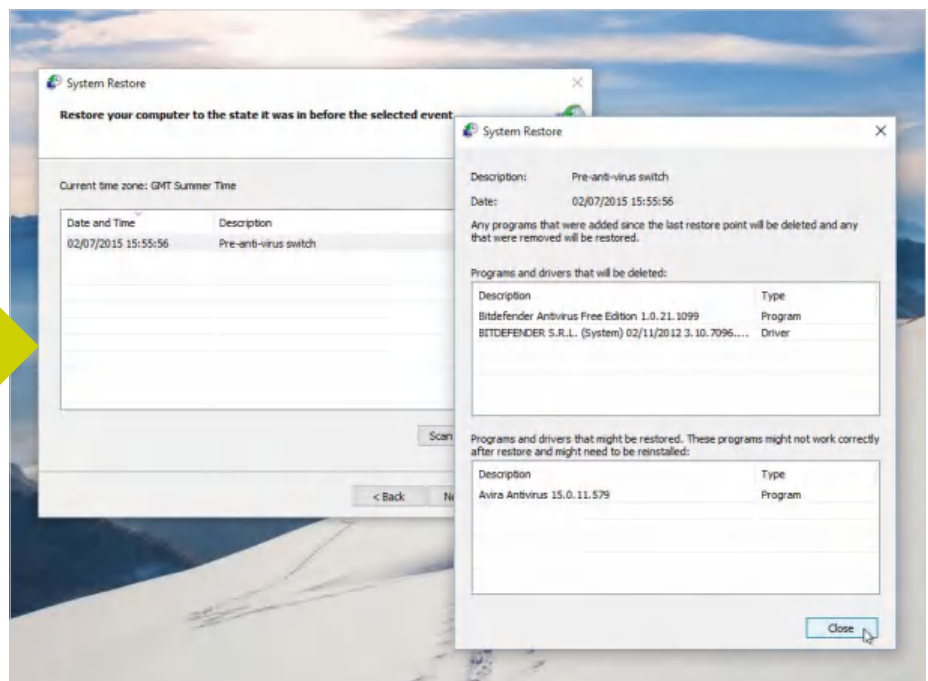
If you can boot into Windows, access System Restore via the desktop. Type 'System Protection' into the search bar and click 'Create a restore point' followed by 'System Restore...'. If Windows won't start, you can use System Restore automatically. Or, boot from your USB recovery disk, select 'Troubleshoot', 'Advanced options' and then 'System Restore'.



Restore Points

Decide how far Windows should turn back the clock

By default, Windows recommends you use the most recent Restore Point; in fact, you may even find it's the only Restore Point offered. Make a note of the time and date it was taken, and click 'Scan for affected programs' to see which programs and hardware drivers will be affected by rolling back your PC to this point. You'll see the programs that will be removed if you choose it, and others that will be restored. This should help you decide whether to use it or not.



Send your PC back in time

Choose a Restore Point to undo problematic changes

To restore a recommended Restore Point, click 'Next' and follow the prompts to roll back your PC. If this doesn't work, or you want to try an earlier Restore Point, select 'Choose a different Restore Point' and click 'Next'. Browse through the available points, noting what would be affected by choosing each one. After restoring, you can undo the process if it doesn't have the desired effect.

Reinstall or recover?

If all else fails, a full recovery or reinstall should fix your problem – but make sure you've backed up first!

There's no need to tear your hair out if nothing seems to help with the troubleshooting. You can go the whole hog, wipe your hard drive clean and restore Windows to its factory settings. This approach will delete any personal data you have saved on the drive, so make sure it's fully backed up first, using our guidelines earlier.

It's also a good idea to make a note of any programs you've installed on your PC, so you can download and restore them after Windows has been reinstalled.

Reinstall Windows

Microsoft knows how painful the reinstall process can be, which is why with Windows 10 it's gone out of its way to make the process easier than ever for you.

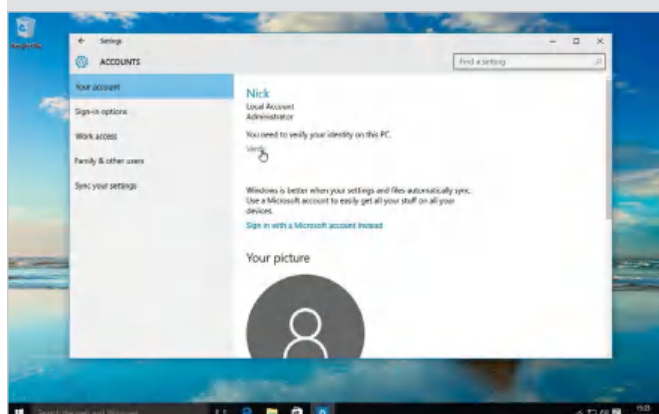
The simplest way to reinstall Windows is through Windows itself. Click 'Start > Settings >

Update & security > Recovery' and then choose 'Get started' under 'Reset this PC'. A full reinstall wipes your entire drive, so select 'Remove everything' to ensure a clean reinstall is performed. If Windows fails to load, you should be shown the troubleshooting screen, which you can also access via your recovery drive if you created one. In these circumstances, select 'Troubleshoot' followed by 'Reset your PC'.

One of the benefits of this new approach is that Windows attempts to recover from a previously created system image or – failing that – using a special series of install files that download the latest version of Windows during the reinstall process.

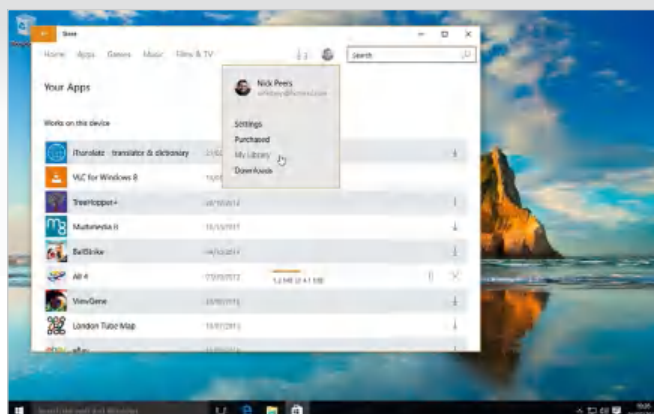
In practical terms this means you'll avoid a lengthy series of post-install updates to download and install in order to bring Windows itself back up to date. The reset process is simple: your PC reboots, then after a pause while things are being prepared,

USE YOUR BACKUPS



1 Restore settings

You'll need to log into your Microsoft account in order to restore your synced settings and previously installed apps. Before these are all restored, you'll need to verify your account on this device: click 'Start > Settings > Accounts > Your account' and click the 'Verify' link to get the code required to add your PC back into the trusted list.



2 Restore apps

Open the Windows Store ('Start > All Apps > Store'), click your user photo and choose 'My Library' to access all previously installed apps (and your settings). Click 'Show all' and then click the download button next to each app you wish to restore. Once done, click your user photo again, but this time choose 'Downloads' to update the built-in apps.

you may be confronted by a screen asking you if you want to remove files from all of your drives, or just the drive that Windows is installed on. Unless you're planning on disposing of the PC, select 'Only the drive where Windows is installed' to protect data files stored on other partitions or drives.

You'll also be given an option to 'clean the drive fully' – again, skip this unless you're selling on your PC. Finally, click 'Reset' and let your PC do the rest.

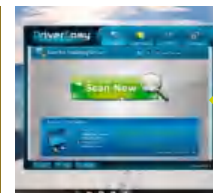
Post reinstall

Once restored you'll have a brand new system at your disposal and it's time to reinstall your apps, apply preferences and restore backed-up data. The step-by-step walkthrough shown below reveals everything you need to know.

Of course, you'll need to reinstall your key desktop applications, too, after this has been done. Again, take the time to download the latest versions and set each one up. This can all take an hour or two – to speed up future reinstalls, check out the box below-right to create the perfect Windows image, complete with all your apps, programs and settings in place. ■

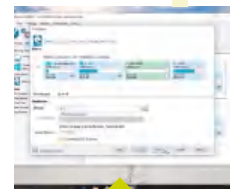
5 HANDY RECOVERY TOOLS

Fabulous freebies to help you get going again in Windows 8.1

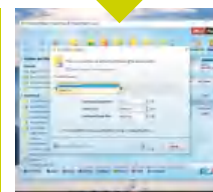


DriverEasy
This handy tool can find and install any hardware drivers you can't identify after reinstalling Windows. www.drivereasy.com

Partition Wizard Home Edition
Partitioning your hard drive lets you separate your data from your programs. www.partitionwizard.com

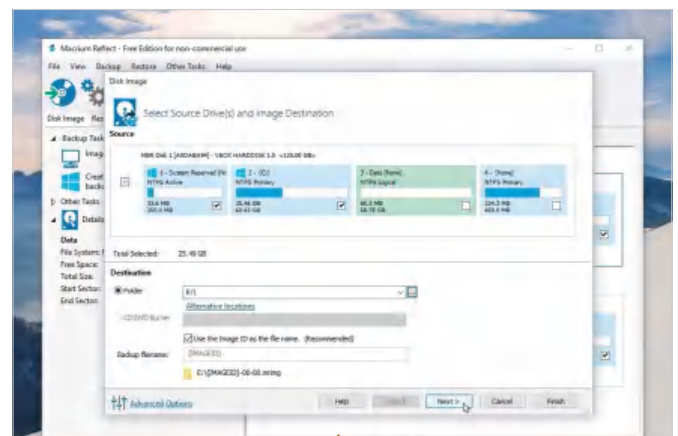
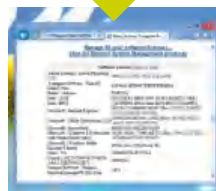


Comodo Backup
This Comodo Backup tool gives you granular control over what you back up and can be fairly useful. www.comodo.com



Ninite
This tool lets you select lots of popular apps, then download and install them all in a single package. www.ninite.com

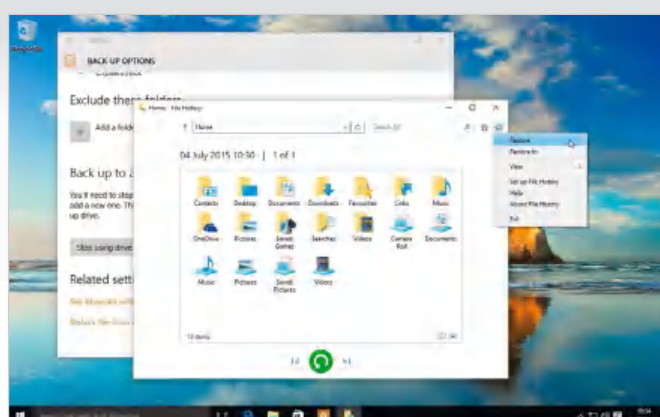
Belarc Advisor
Lost or forgotten your Windows or software product keys? Get them back before reinstalling with this. www.belarc.com



Speed up future Windows reinstalls

Get your perfect Windows setup quickly and easily next time you have to reinstall

Reinstalling and setting up Windows again can be a chore, so speed up future reinstalls by creating a perfect recovery image. After reinstalling Windows and apps, reinstall your key programs and set them up as you like them. Then, before you restore your File History backup, launch Macrium Reflect Free and take a new drive image. Create a recovery CD or USB stick following the prompts, and next time you need to reinstall Windows, make sure your File History backup is up to date, then boot from your recovery media before restoring this drive image. All you'll need to do is bring Windows and your apps up to date, and reinstall new programs. Before restoring your File History backup, create a new drive image to use the next time you need to reinstall Windows.



3 Restore files

Finally, restore your files using File History. With your back-up device plugged in, click 'Start > Settings > Update & security > Backup'. Click 'Add a drive' to select your back-up device, then click 'More Options' followed by 'Restore files from a current backup'. Click the Settings cog and choose 'Restore' to recover your data. This can take a little time, so be patient. ■

The 20 best FREE GAMES

Words: Daniel Griliopoulos

Right now for your PC

We're under no illusion that playing games can be one of the biggest time-sucks out there. And with so many to choose from, there really are not enough hours in the day. To soften the blow of gaming addiction we've compiled a list of our favourite games that are completely free to play (F2P). However, if you're feeling generous you might want to thank the heroic developers by leaving them a little donation on their site.

The games over the next few pages are as good as any paid game. There should be something for everyone. It's worth saying we've had to leave out an awful lot of great games. Most sadly was the amount of indie games we've not been able to cover. Look on sites such as Warpdoor (www.warpdoor.com) and IndieGames (www.indiegames.com) to discover these smaller titles.

And to mention just a few others... League of Legends, World of Guns, Flow, Humanoid 47, Kingdom of Loathing, A Dark Room, Fallen London, No One Has to Die, Neverwinter, Smite, Hawken, Wolfenstein 3D, Tyrian, Realm of the Mad God...



WESTERADO

The West was full of hard men with identikit faces who you can try to recognise from wanted posters. Men whose hats you can shoot off. Men who can pull a gun at any point during a conversation, just to make a point. Westerado is half Zelda-world-exploration game and half slapstick-gritty tale of cowboy revenge, and it's incredibly stylish and totally free. If you want to support the developers, a paid-for version of the game with slightly more content is available on Steam. <http://bit.ly/1dVw25e>



SAMOROST 1 & 2

Amanita's delightful browser games (named after the Czech for 'driftwood') are set on a strange, small planet inhabited by a gnome. You control him to avert a collision with a spaceship by solving a series of surreal organic puzzles. Creative character designs, innovative art and a haunting soundtrack made both games a success. Later, the same company made Machinarium, generally considered to be the best indie game of 2009. Now it's working on Samorost 3. <http://amanita-design.net/games.html>



CARD HUNTER

One of the smartest games around, Card Hunter is a mix of D&D and Magic: The Gathering. You take the role of a team of geeks playing an RPG against their novice dungeon master. You have three characters, each with a deck of cards determined by their class, race and equipment. With a neat plot following the fictional roleplay session, as well as a separate story in-game, there's also a PvP mode. The recent expansion added science-fiction tropes. www.cardhunter.com



Get your Lord of the Rings fix for free

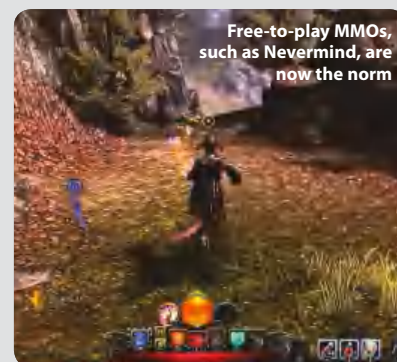
LORD OF THE RINGS ONLINE

Rift may be much shinier, and Dungeons & Dragons: Online might be more familiar to most gamers, but the now-aged LOTRO will always have a special place in our hearts. Players take control of an innocent, whose plot tracks alongside the plot of the *Lord of the Rings* books, supporting the Fellowship quietly. With beautiful recreations of the Shire, Rivendell, Moria and Weathertop, it genuinely feels like Middle Earth. On the flip side, you can also play as a max-level monster in PvP against other humans. We just hope they can keep the game going to complete the story. www.lotro.com



TRACKMANIA NATIONS FOREVER

Few game developers know how to bottle joy. It takes a combination of special things – bright, clear art, simple mechanics and endless replayability. Super Mario Sunshine has it, and so does the PC-only stunt-racer Trackmania. It also lets you create your own tracks, try them out, share them and challenge your friends. Forever isn't the newest version of Trackmania, but it combines the best earlier versions of the game – Trackmania Original, Sunrise and Nations – which means it has huge amounts of content. Visit: <http://trackmaniaforever.com>



Free-to-play MMOs, such as Nevermind, are now the norm

The Death of MMOs

The free games revolution opened up all sorts of genres that seemed stagnant or vanished – puzzle adventure games have been revived by the hidden object game, and platformers by the flash platform – but it's slowly spelled the death knell for paid-for massively multiplayer online games, or MMOs.

"Free-to-play, it's the better business model," Mike Donatelli told us. He's from Carbine Studios, creator of Wildstar. "There are no barriers to entry. Pick any forum and there'll be people saying, 'I like the game, I'm just not paying you any money for it.' We acknowledge the MMO community has evolved past the (subscription) business model."

It's also interesting that investing huge sums of money into creating these MMOs seems less attractive, as revealed by Blizzard's Mike Morhaime, when the dev's World of Warcraft follow-up Titan was cancelled. "We didn't find the fun," he said. "We didn't find the passion. We talked about how we put it through a reevaluation period, and actually, what we reevaluated is whether that's the game we really wanted to be making. The answer is no." The games that it seems to want to be making are Hearthstone and Heroes of the Storm – both free, small, multiplayer, skill-based games with strictly limited ambition. So Titan was turned into a small, skill-based multiplayer shooter called Overwatch.

Of those MMOs that were subscription-based very few are still so. Star Wars: The Old Republic, Rift, Dungeons & Dragons Online, Neverwinter, Star Trek Online, The Elder Scrolls Online... they've all changed their stripes, cancelling the subscription charges and quite often the upfront purchase cost as well, instead charging for in-game fripperies.



Top Grossing iPhone Games UNITED STATES

| RANK | FREE | PAID | GAME |
|------|------|------|---|
| 1 | 20 | - | Clash of Clans |
| 2 | 32 | - | Game of War - Fire Age |
| 3 | 21 | - | Candy Crush Saga |
| 4 | 29 | - | Candy Crush Soda Saga |
| 5 | 49 | - | Bejeweled |
| 6 | - | - | Big Fish Casino - Free Slots, Vegas Slots & More |
| 7 | 118 | - | DoubleDown Casino - Free Slots, Video Poker, B... |

Lessons from Mobile Gaming

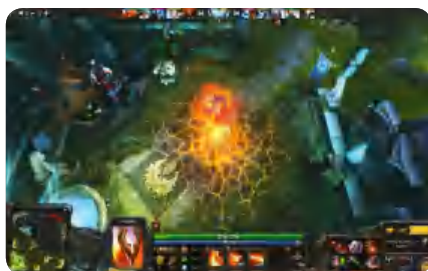
Free gaming may have started on PC with freeware titles like Wolfenstein 3D, but mobile games are its home. Take a squint at that image above – that's the top 50 highest grossing games on iOS on a particular day in August this year. The highest ranked paid-for game was Minecraft: Pocket Edition (\$6.99) at number 24, followed by the creepy Five Nights at Freddy's at 39. Apart from that, every other game was free and making huge amounts of money. Clash of Clans, already out for years, made \$1.6 million in a week, in just the US.

This is partly a result of the ease of microtransactions on mobile devices. Players can buy an in-game item for a miniscule sum of money without leaving the app or hunting down their credit card information – indeed, on the newer iPhones, it's just a tap of your thumbprint and you've spent the money.

It's partly because the developers making games on these platforms are obsessed with money. These aren't hipster indies keen to demonstrate their credentials and make a critical success. If you attend one of the mobile game conferences, such as Pocketgamer Presents or Mobile World Congress, the talk is all about monetisation, and has been for years. How to make money more efficiently? How to buy customers and good reviews? How to game the various in-game advertising systems? How to artificially bump yourself up the charts and get Apple's attention? Every year, Apple bans another method of making money from mobile games, like some financial regulator dealing with dodgy banks.

But it's mostly the result of market saturation. There are so many games released every day – so many good ones and so many knock-offs – that the effect has been to push the price to zero. Why buy Angry Birds for £1.99 when you can get the functionally identical Ornerly Avians for free? It's a constant worry of PC game developers that the price of all games will be driven down to zero.

Team Fortress 2 was the game that kickstarted the F2P revolution



DOTA 2

There's no denying the popularity of Valve's team arena game. At the time of writing, 16 teams are competing for a prize of millions, with much of the money coming from the game's community. The game has you taking control of a unique character alongside four others, playing against another team of five in a RTS map. You need to level up and take down the enemy's towers and fortress, while preventing them from destroying yours. <http://blog.dota2.com>



HEARTHSTONE

Another Blizzard title, this game signifies a huge change in the World of Warcraft dev's style. Instead of creating huge games that cost the GDP of a small country to rake in tons of money... it's doing the same thing, but with free games. Hearthstone is a Collectible Card Game, in which you pay or play to unlock cards, building decks for competitive play, or for use against the AI in one-off battles or story campaigns. It's highly skillful, but also rewards casual players. <http://bit.ly/1F2zqJn>



TEAM FORTRESS 2

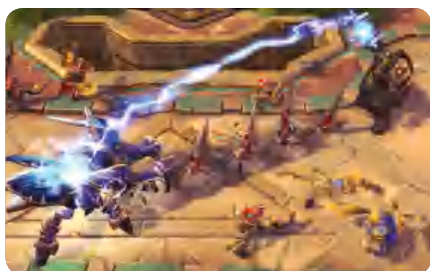
Though Team Fortress 2 has fallen out of favour in recent years, it was the game that revolutionised free-to-play gaming. Players compete in two teams of cartoon movie caricatures – from the minigun-toting Heavy to the Germanic-accented Medic – battling over objectives such as capturing bases or simply killing as many of each other as possible. A range of game-mode additions, AI bots, custom maps and a huge range of weapons – both randomly dropped and bought – have given the game a huge amount of replayability. www.teamfortress.com



Path of Exile may not be as pretty as the paid-for titles, but it packs as much punch

PATH OF EXILE

Though Diablo 2 is widely acknowledged as the king of the action RPG genre, and Diablo 3 is the prettiest example of the genre (save for maybe Torchlight 2), these are paid-for games. By contrast, Path of Exile is neither particularly beautiful, not as crunchy as Diablo 2, but it is free and extremely well-made and compelling. It's the kind of game where you kill thousands of enemies in your lust for loot – and maybe to move the story on. It has a range of game modes (called 'leagues') that change regularly. Oh, and it has the world's most ridiculous skill tree. www.pathofexile.com



HEROES OF THE STORM

It seems mad to have two multiplayer online battle arenas (MOBAs) here. Particularly two that are so similar. And especially mad to leave out League of Legends. But LoL is older than Dota, and features almost identical gameplay to an outsider. By comparison, Heroes of the Storm is more casual and accessible. Players take control of a hero from the Starcraft, Warcraft and Diablo universes, with a larger variety of maps compared to DOTA and LoL. <http://eu.battle.net/heroes/en/>



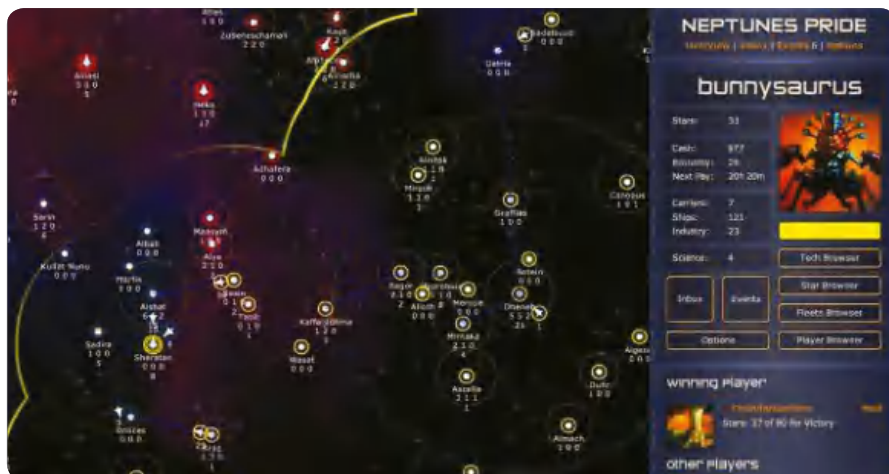
THE CAT AND THE COUP

There are many free indie games, but few with a message as moral as The Cat and the Coup. Players control the president of Iran's cat during the CIA/MI6-engineered coup that brought down the democratically elected government, and led eventually to the current Islamic state. You use the cat to solve puzzles and move the president. It's as much interactive art and history lesson as it is a game. www.thecatandthecoup.com



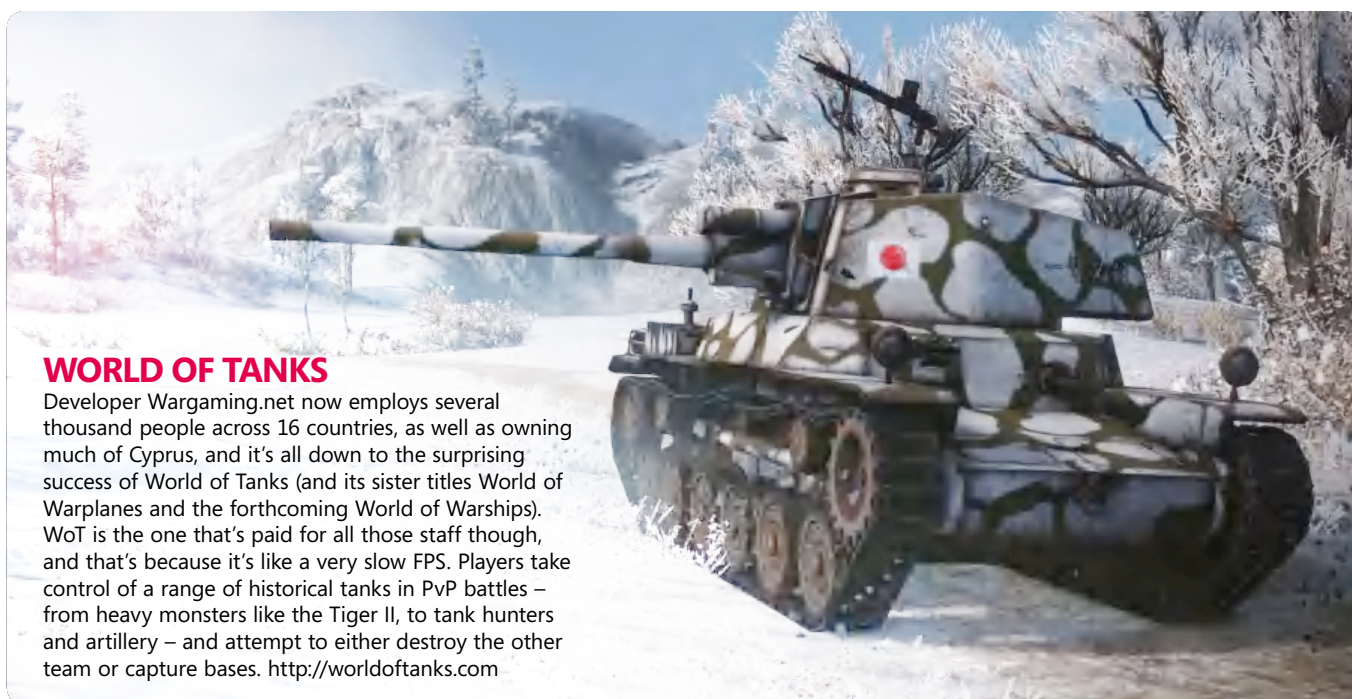
FROG FRACTIONS

The game is a strange amalgam of parody and adventure, sometimes feeling like an edutainment game, sometimes like an escapee from Monty Python. It only lasts an hour, but takes you through politics, philosophy, drama, a law court, a strange upgrade tree and much time spent eating insects. The sequel has been Kickstarted but not released – indeed, the creator has suggested he could release it under a completely different name. <http://twinbeard.com/frog-fractions/>



NEPTUNE'S PRIDE 2

How much do you like your friends? Really like them? How much would it take to break you apart? If the answer is 'not a lot', then you might want to move on from Neptune's Pride. The game, like the boardgame Diplomacy, is a real-time game of power balances and betrayal set within a galactic space. You gradually build your fleets and your friendships with your neighbours, conducting diplomacy, researching technology, forming alliances, reinforcing your planets and investing in peace... and then you turn on each other in an orgy of destruction. As each game can take several weeks, the betrayals really hurt. <http://np.ironhelmet.com>



WORLD OF TANKS

Developer Wargaming.net now employs several thousand people across 16 countries, as well as owning much of Cyprus, and it's all down to the surprising success of World of Tanks (and its sister titles World of Warplanes and the forthcoming World of Warships). WoT is the one that's paid for all those staff though, and that's because it's like a very slow FPS. Players take control of a range of historical tanks in PvP battles – from heavy monsters like the Tiger II, to tank hunters and artillery – and attempt to either destroy the other team or capture bases. <http://worldoftanks.com>



THE UR-QUAN MASTERS

In 1992 there was a game called Star Control II that involved the exploration of star systems, hyperspace travel, alien diplomacy and 25 alien species to 'engage' with. But really, beneath the skin, it was an adventure game, where you pilot the last surviving free spaceship in a bid to free the galaxy from the despotic Ur-Quan, while they're distracted by civil war. The Ur-Quan Masters is an open-source 2002 port that brought Star Control II to modern operating systems – for which, we're very grateful.



N 2.0

The N games have quietly been the inspiration behind many other action-puzzle games, but have never achieved mainstream success. You control a ninja, who uses impetus and physics to make his way through a maze of death. Homing missiles, mines and plain-nasty gravity are all threats as you collect keys and points, and attempt to complete each level in double-quick time. If you like this, you can buy the comprehensive N++, which has just come out. <http://bit.ly/1mQIEnc>



THE REPUBLIA TIMES

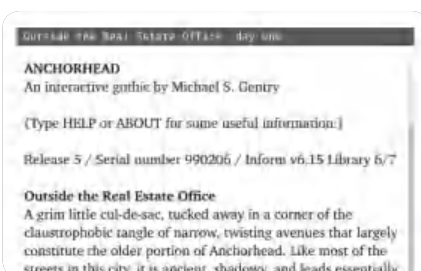
Lucas Pope is better known for creating Papers Please, the dystopian border control game, where you have to balance your family's welfare, a totalitarian state's insane laws and the lives of those crossing the border. This game is another of his. As the editor of a propaganda newspaper, in The Republia Times, your job is to keep as many of the people loyal as possible, despite the dreadful things your regime is doing, by emphasising only positive stories. Visit: <http://bit.ly/1JuTKYS>

When it comes to combat Planetside aims for bigger and better



PLANETSID 2

Team Fortress 2 might have the best small team combat in the world, but if you want combined arms combat – that is a huge variety of tanks, vehicles, infantry and aircraft – then the Planetside series is where you've got to go. Players join one of three factions fighting across several continents on the huge open world of Auraxis. The FPS combat and world layout is smartly done, so players can find themselves in huge battles or playing cat and mouse in empty enemy bases. The only caveat is that levelling to get more equipment takes some time and the real money kit is rather expensive. www.planetside2.com



ANCHORHEAD

There are thousands of text adventures available for free, from the older Zork games to Inform and Twine games such as Horse Masters, Slouching Towards Bedlam, Violet, Galatea, 80 Days, Long Legs and more. Visit www.ifarchive.org to find out more. But Anchorhead happens to be one of the best-written and most-accessible interactive fiction games, set in the Cthulhu mythos. You've moved to a new house and new town, but something old and nasty is stirring... <http://pr-if.org/play/anchorhead/>



SUPER CRATE BOX

Vlambeer is the current darling of indie development. Super Crate Box is a retro single-screen game, resembling the original Game and Watch Nintendo machines, where enemies fall from the top of the screen and crates full of weapons spawn randomly. You must survive for as long as possible while killing enemies using the random weapons. If you like this, try Vlambeer's other games, such as Luftrausers or Nuclear Throne. <http://bit.ly/1I7MVad>

The Future of Free



Mark Sorrell, from Angry Birds creator Rovio, talks behavioural science and economics

What's the state of play of F2P?

F2P is healthy and growing. It's still young and, despite the number of entrants to the genre, there is surprisingly little innovation or new thinking. But make no mistake, the biggest games on the planet are free to play, and due to the importance of network effects in making F2P economies work, are strengthening their positions over time.

Is there a type of game where the paid model still makes sense?

This depends on how you define 'type of game', but if you have an enthusiastic user base, who are happy to pay up-front and willing to buy further content inside the game, then it's possible to make great returns with a pay-up-front system.

The free part of free to play is a marketing stunt. Combining the large user bases free can provide with the variable pricing of an IAP economy is how F2P has become so dominant – barriers to entry are as low as possible and potential upside is as high as possible. So paid models can still make huge money where two things are true. A high enough percentage of their total market must be willing to pay and the game must feature lots of things to buy inside the game.

With expensive hardware-heavy tech, like VR, does F2P still have an advantage, given the consumer-level financial barriers to entry?

No. VR seems likely to remain a novelty for early adopters for a significant time to come, and they are exactly the sort of user base that are easy to market to and willing to pay up-front. They are also likely to pay a premium for the chance to show-off or experience their new toy at its best. Alongside that, the hardware requirements will shrink the market, which makes the social drivers behind a lot of F2P spending harder to engineer. And then the sessioning the hardware demands further limits game design. So, where F2P will work, it will be the League of Legends/Hearthstone kind of design, rather than anything from mobile.

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Squad**



Support



► WINDOWS HELP ► HARDWARE FIXES ► SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS ► INTERNET TIPS



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problem to the
support team and we'll
do our best to help
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futurenet.com](mailto:windowsmagazine@futurenet.com)

Hard drives **WHAT ARE THESE MYSTERY PARTITIONS?**

Q I was preparing my Sony SVE1712 laptop for an upgrade to Windows 10 when I came across a number of strange drives or partitions being listed in Disk Defragmenter and then Disk Management. There appear to be no less than six in total, which

appear in the following order: OEM Partition (260MB), Recovery Partition (1.44GB), EFI System Partition (260MB), Drive C (662.45GB), Recovery Partition (450MB), and Recovery Partition (33.67GB). Can you help me identify these, and why do all of them (except drive C) report 100 per cent free space?

Maurice Liddle

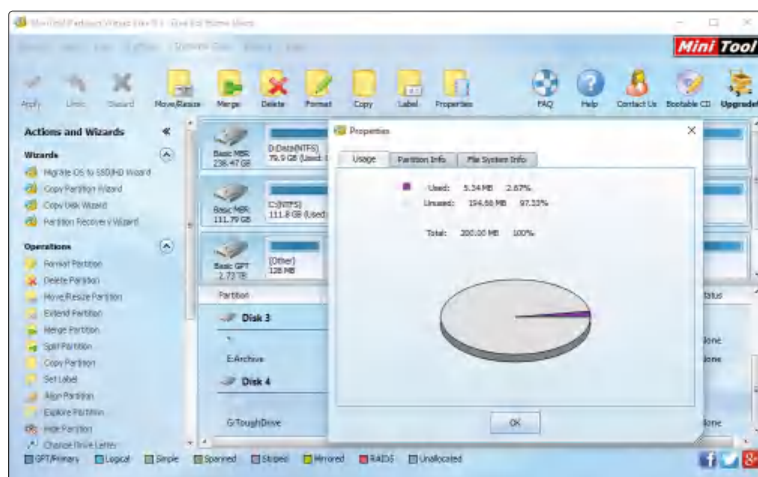


Graham's solution

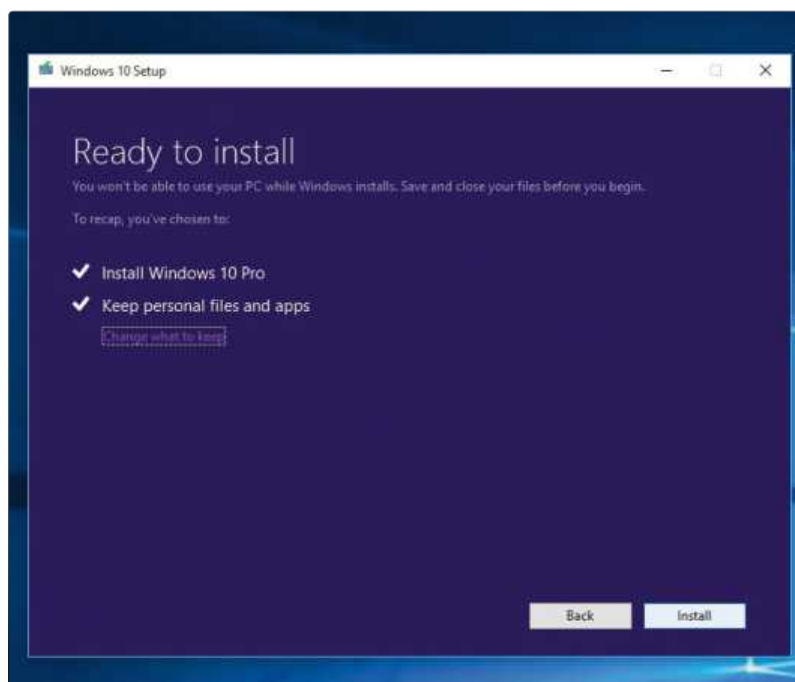
The first two partitions in the list are created by your laptop manufacturer and exist to provide recovery options and restore your PC to its factory settings if required. The EFI partition contains Windows boot files, while the final two partitions would have been created when you updated from Windows 8 to Windows 8.1, allowing you to roll back if you need to. The reason the drives appear to be empty in Disk Management is that it's not able to read them correctly – use a tool like MiniTool Partition Wizard (www.partitionwizard.com/free-partition-manager.html) to get an accurate reading. Finally, none of this should have an effect on your upgrade to Windows 10, which should be a smooth experience.

Windows **FIX CORRUPT STORE AND APPS WITH A REFRESH**

Q A week ago I had a blue-screen of death message that contained Chinese characters for



HOW BIG?
Partition Wizard
provides accurate
information about
your drives



REPAIR WINDOWS
Perform an upgrade installation to refresh Windows 10

Quickfire questions

An update linked to Flash Player appears to have failed. Will Microsoft abort this and issue one that works?
Bob Sullivan

If updates don't successfully install, it's best to wait a few days – in most cases (as it was with this Flash Player update), a fixed update will be issued.

Is there a way to pin a shortcut to System Properties on the Start menu in Windows 10?
Joe Pink

No need – instead, click 'Start', right-click File Explorer and choose 'Properties' to access it; select 'Manage' to access Computer Management.

some reason. Since that date I've been unable to access key Windows 10 apps (including Calculator, Photos and Mail), which are all greyed out along with the Store app. I tried following a series of PowerShell commands, but discovered the Get-AppXPackage command fails right at the end. Can you help me resolve this issue?

Jim Thomas



Nick P's solution

One recommended solution is to first run the 'sfc /scannow' command in an elevated command prompt – if problems are found, but can't be fixed, then trying 'dism /online /cleanup-image /restorehealth' should allow you to subsequently run the PowerShell command to restore the apps.

Unfortunately, Jim received an error message when trying to run the dism command, which indicated a major underlying problem. We investigated further and discovered that refreshing Windows 10 should resolve the issue – to do this, download the Media Creation Tool following the instructions at bit.ly/win10media – when prompted, choose the Upgrade option to install Windows 10 over the top of itself and replace the corrupt files, keeping all your apps, files and settings when prompted. On doing so, Jim was able to report the Store and its apps were working correctly again.

Hardware CHOOSING A 10-INCH PC

I'm in the market for something with a screen not exceeding 10 inches, but with good definition, a touchscreen and support for Windows 10. Could you help me by suggesting a tablet or laptop that would fit these requirements and my budget of around £300?

William Charnley



Cat's solution

Take a look at HP's Pavilion X2 range of tablet/laptop hybrids. All models boast a detachable 10.1-inch touchscreen (1,280x800 pixels). One to look at is the n107na

"Install Windows 10 over the top of itself and replace the corrupt files"

Jargon buster!

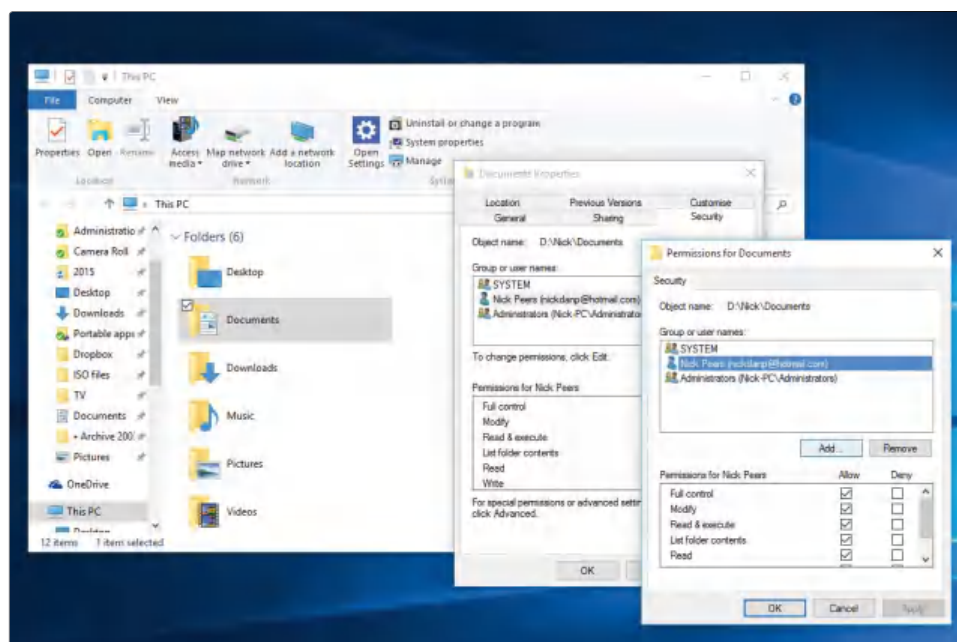
► Elevated mode

A mode that allows standard user accounts to perform specific tasks as an administrator, giving them greater access to the system.

► EFI System Partition

A special partition found on modern PCs that contains the files required to boot Windows.

REGAIN ACCESS
Make sure your username has full access to your key folders



Quickfire questions

Is there some quick and convenient way I can view what add-ins are installed in my copy of Office?

Kurt Waller

Download Officeins from www.nirsoft.net/utis/officeins.html – it's a portable tool that lets you view all Office add-ins, with useful info such as name, description and which Office program it's linked to.

I can't seem to boot into Safe mode using the [F8] key in Windows 10. Can you advise?

David Greecer

Click 'Start', then hold [Shift] and choose 'Power > Restart'. Windows will reboot to the 'Choose an option' menu – from here select 'Troubleshoot > Advanced Options > Startup Settings' and choose which flavour of Safe mode to employ.

I've transferred some old audio interviews to my PC via Audacity – can you recommend a tool to help transcribe them?

Georgia Illingworth

Try Listen N Write Free (elefantsoftware-en.weebly.com) – it comprises a basic media player and text editor, and automatically pauses every five seconds during playback to let you catch up with your typing.

x2 model. This comes with Windows 10 pre-installed, and is powered by an Intel T3 Z8300 quad-core processor – good for browsing, office apps and other light use. There's 2GB RAM and 32GB flash storage onboard, plus a 1TB SATA drive. It'll swallow up all of your available budget – a cheaper model (the n102na) is available for £249 without the 1TB drive. Visit store.hp.com/uk and go to Laptops then 2-in-1 Detachable Laptops to view.

Windows PERMISSIONS ISSUE AFTER UPGRADE

Q Since installing Windows 10 I've had a problem with both my Documents and Pictures folders, which prevents me from transferring files into either folder. I've open each folder's Properties and checked the Security tab, which shows that I've only got read-only access, but every time I change this to 'Full control', it reverts back as soon as I reboot my PC. Can you please help?

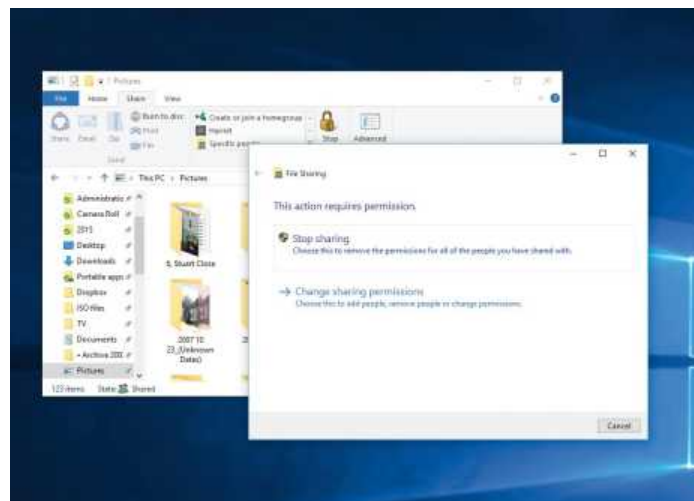
James Gill



Graham's solution

We asked James to check each folder's ownership (click 'Advanced' from the 'Properties > Security' tab), and he confirmed his user account was the owner. He then reported which users and groups had access: SYSTEM and Administrators had full access, while HomeUsers had read-only access. The problem here was that James' own user account had somehow gone missing, so we advised him on how to get it back. Click 'Edit...' on the 'Properties > Security' tab, then click 'Add...' Type your user name and click 'Check Names'. It should appear, so

STOP SHARING
Unshare a folder if its files are locked by another app



click 'OK'. Tick the 'Full Control' box under 'Allow' and click 'OK' – you should see the files in the folder update, indicating the permissions are being updated. Once done, James reported the folders were behaving properly once again, even after rebooting.

Photos CAN'T EDIT PHOTOS

Q I recently upgraded my HP all-in-one PC to Windows 10, but have stumbled on a problem with my pictures. When I try to edit them, I get a message informing me that 'This file is locked by another app at the moment'. Could this be related to an app (Sony Play memories) that I downloaded but uninstalled?

David Potts



Matt's solution

By the time we responded, David had managed to find his own solution to the problem, which he was happy to share with us. He opened his Pictures folder in File Explorer and went through the

HOW TO IMPORT FIREFOX BOOKMARKS INTO EDGE

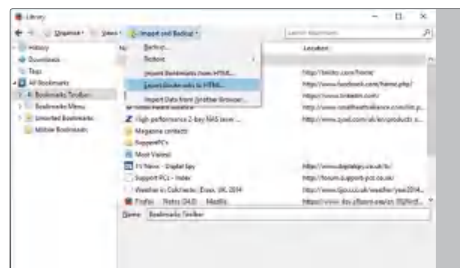
Q I was under the impression I could import my Firefox bookmarks into the new Edge browser, but there's no option. Can you provide me with a workaround or fix?

Harriet White



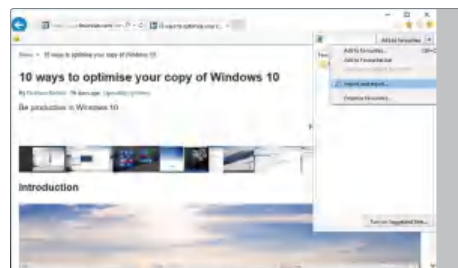
Nick O's solution

The following workaround will work with Firefox or any web browser that allows you to export your bookmarks as a HTML file. We're using Internet Explorer, but Chrome works too.



1 Export bookmarks

Open Firefox and press [Ctrl] + [Shift] + [B] to open the Bookmarks Manager. Click 'Import and Backup > Export Bookmarks to HTML...', browse to a suitable location for the bookmarks.html file (which you can rename) and click Save.



2 Switch to Internet Explorer

Now type IE into the Search box and click the 'Internet Explorer' entry. Click the Favourites button, then click the arrow next to 'Add to Favourites' and choose 'Import and export...' Select 'Import from a file' and click 'Next'.

various options on the ribbon to see if he could find a possible solution. He discovered a 'Stop sharing' button on the Share tab, and clicking this resolved the problem, allowing him to edit photos once more...

Windows A QUESTION OF UPGRADE ELIGIBILITY

Q I intend to install Windows 7 from DVD on a new 120GB SSD and then upgrade to Windows 10 on top of that. Issue 114 suggests the upgrade will only work if Service Pack 1 is installed on Windows 7 – is this likely to be on my Windows DVD, and if not where do I get it? Or can I do a clean install of Windows 10 using my Windows 7 product key and avoid the hassle?
Eric Howman



Mayank's solution

Unfortunately you'll need to install Windows 7 SP1 before you can upgrade to Windows 10. This only has to be done once, though – in future, you'll be able to perform a clean reinstall of Windows 10 directly to the same PC without having to install Windows 7 first (or worry about a product key). Service Pack 1 will be offered through Windows Update, or you can download SP1 directly from bit.ly/getwin7sp1 and install it offline. Once done, you can upgrade to Windows 10 using the Media Creation Tool (bit.ly/win10media) without having to download any additional updates.

I realised there was no sound – I immediately entered Device Manager and allowed it to search for an updated sound driver, which it found and subsequently installed. After rebooting, it ran for a few minutes before crashing with the following message: 'Kmode exception not handled rtkvac.sys'. In addition, the visuals on the laptop are what I'd describe as soft. Can you help me rectify both problems?
Robert Nesbitt



Nick P's solution

Unfortunately, the prognosis is not good. The A6U comes with a SiS M661 graphics chipset, which isn't DirectX 9 compatible, and for which no driver has been provided since Windows XP. Subsequently,

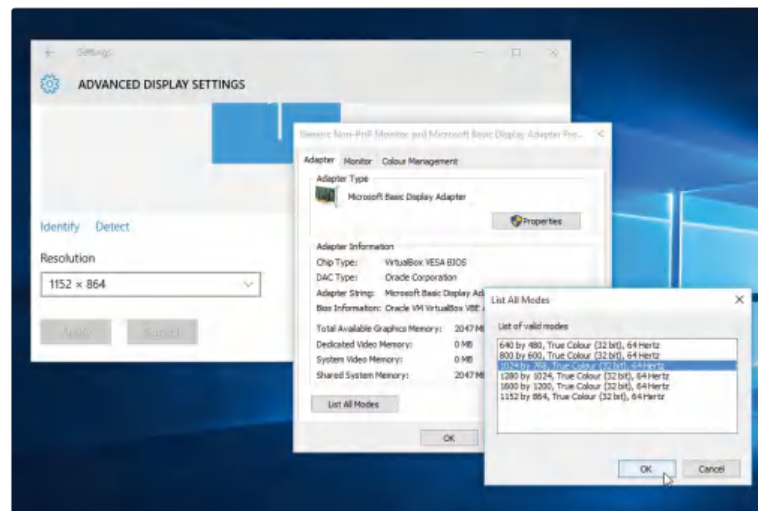
Robert was stuck with the supplied Microsoft Basic Display Adapter, hence the soft images – it's likely he was running this driver in Windows 8.1 too, although the problem wasn't so noticeable there.

The rtkvac.sys file is linked to the updated sound driver that Robert installed, based on the Realtek AC97 chipset. A bug was found in the drivers and reported to Realtek, but seeing as the drivers haven't been updated since 2009, a fix is unlikely to be forthcoming, sadly. Robert managed to revert to Windows 8.1 using the rollback function, and reported the sound problem had been fixed, although he continues to suffer from the soft image problem caused by the fact he's stuck with the Basic Display Adapter. ■



Do you have a PC problem? Get in touch...

Email full details of your problem to the support team and we'll do our best to help: windowsmagazine@futurenet.com Or write to the support team and we'll do our best to help: **Support Squad, Windows Help & Advice magazine, Future Publishing Ltd, Quay House, The Ambury, Bath BA1 1AU**

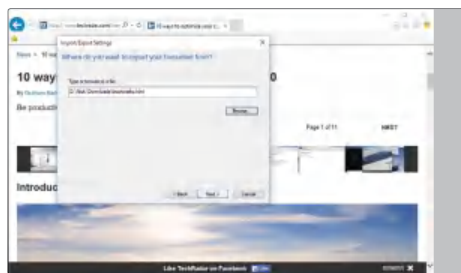


NO-FRILLS DISPLAY The Basic Display adapter offers a limited set of options

Hardware GRAPHICS AND SOUND ISSUES IN WINDOWS 10

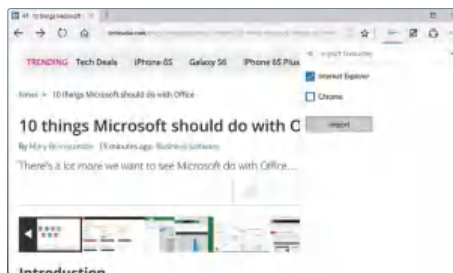
Q I recently updated my Asus A6U notebook from Windows 8.1 to Windows 10. After upgrading

"The problem here was that James' own user account had somehow gone missing, so we advised him on how to get it back"



3 Import the file

Tick the 'Favourites' box and click 'Next' again. Click 'Browse' to locate the bookmarks file, then click it to select it followed by 'Open' and then 'Next'. Choose where to place the favourites and click 'Import'. Wait, then click 'Finish' when prompted.



4 Import to Edge

Close Internet Explorer and open 'Edge' from its taskbar shortcut. Click the menu button and select the 'Favourites' button. Click 'Import favourites', make sure Internet Explorer is ticked and finally click 'Import' to complete the process.

Jargon buster!

► HomeUsers

A group of users that is created alongside a HomeGroup, which contains a list of the accounts that have access to the files.

► SSD

Stands for 'Solid State Drive', which is a hard drive that stores data on interconnected flash memory chips. SSD drives have no moving parts, and transfer data much quicker than traditional drives.



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Welcome



Here at *Windows Help & Advice* we've been working hard.

But don't worry, we haven't been exerting ourselves, we've been letting the tech do that for us. First of all, we take an extensive look at Dell's Inspiron 15 7000 laptop, a computer that feels like it was designed specifically with Windows 10 in mind. Meanwhile HP's Pavilion Mini is one of the best-looking mini PCs we've seen. Plantronics BackBeat Sense luxury earphones also make good, er, sense (and allow us to create popular song-lyric puns), too. Until next time!

Nick Odantzis deputy editor
nick.odantzis@futurenet.com

This issue's highlights



80 Dell Inspiron 15 7000

A computer that feels like it has been designed specifically around Windows 10



82 Sony MP-CL1

A portable projection option that comes in a wonderfully tiny package



84 HP Pavilion Mini

One of the best-looking mini PCs we've seen – a Windows-toting answer to the Mini Mac?



86 Plantronics BackBeat Sense

BackBeat, the word is on the street that these headphones are worth a shout

88 Mini-test High-res audio players

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The Upgrade section is your key to finding out about the latest products, all designed to help you get more from your PC

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RATING EXPLAINED ★★★★★ Superb ★★★★★ Very good ★★★★★ Good ★★★★★ Disappointing ★★★★★ Poor



Dell Inspiron 15 7000

£580 | \$899 www.dell.com

An attractive 2-in-1 that's more laptop than tablet

Dell's Inspiron 15 feels like a computer that has been designed specifically around Windows 10. It functions nicely as a laptop, and does an admirable job in tablet mode. Switching between the two configurations allows Windows 10 to ask if you'd like to switch back and forth between the two modes. In either configuration, the Inspiron does well, but with a few exceptions, it's much more useful as a laptop than as a tablet.

With its brushed-aluminum interior finish and backlit, chiclet keyboard, this laptop could easily be mistaken for a MacBook.

The trackpad is set in with a smooth, bevelled border that highlights the change from the aesthetically pleasing surface in a sleek, but striking way. This border carries over to the outside edges of the laptop's aluminum interior, which is milled with a subtle angle, adding a fashionable design

element to the otherwise industrial keyboard deck.

On top of the clean finish, the aluminum makes the machine feel solid. No matter how you hold it – in one hand or two – the laptop never feels like it's straining under its own weight, which is a good thing, considering the machine weighs close to 2.2kg.

The keyboard itself is lovely, with wobble-free keys spaced perfectly and a satisfying amount of travel. The keyboard lights up as well, depending on the ambient light, which is another nice touch on top of also being spill-resistant.

Converted

When converted to tablet mode, there isn't much that jumps out. It's just a large (and colourful) bright screen. Dell did include a Windows button on the bottom of the screen, which is handy for quickly accessing the tablet-mode Start screen – but that's all there is

to get excited about when you have the Inspiron 15 converted.

The keyboard and brains of the computer sag a little on the hinge when folded into tablet mode, so gravity opens it up just slightly. There's no satisfying catch or magnetic clasp to hold the hefty halves together. It's just enough give to raise doubts on how well the hinges will hold up after repeated use.

However, for full-page or endless scrolling websites, the 15-inch screen in tablet mode suddenly turned into something we found indispensable. The same applied to PDF documents.

The Inspiron 15 7000 Series 2-in-1 is a sweet deal. For the price, you get an Intel i5-5200U processor, which performs well under normal use. The chip is able to keep up with Windows 10's streaming from Xbox One feature, and we played a few games without any problems.



KEY FEATURES

Dell Inspiron 15 7000

Operating system Windows 10
Processor 2.2GHz Intel Core i5-5200U (3MB Cache, up to 2.7GHz)
Storage 256GB SSD
RAM 8GB DDR3L (1,600MHz, single channel)
Graphics Intel HD Graphics 5500
Optical drive Optional external DVD-RW (not included in configuration)
Connectivity Intel Centrino Wireless AC 7265, Bluetooth 4.0
Ports HDMI 1.4a, 2 USB 3.0 (one with PowerShare), USB 2.0, Noble lock slot, media card (SD, MMC)
Weight 2.14kg
Screen size 15.6-inch LED backlit Truelife display with FHD resolution (1,920 x 1,080)
Camera Integrated widescreen 720p webcam with dual digital microphone array

However, streaming from the Xbox One and lightweight gaming is all you're going to get out of the Inspiron 15. Minecraft works fine, but we wouldn't recommend trying to play Metal Gear Solid V with it.

There is no dedicated graphics chip. That's a shame, given that the 1,920 x 1,080p full HD (FHD) screen looks great. It's crisp and colourful, with high-resolution images and HD movies looking lovely displayed on it. However, we didn't like the auto-adjusting brightness feature much, but we were able to shut it off.

The setting was too sensitive, and merely moving our hand in front of the front-facing camera

photo-editing without any hiccups or slow performance.

Watching a movie on a continuous loop at 50% brightness and volume, the Inspiron's battery lasted an adequate 5 hours and 16 minutes. That's almost enough to relieve the boredom of a flight without needing to swap to a different device. Still, that's not fantastic and well short of Dell's claim of nearly 9 hours.

But in spite of some performance shortcomings, the Inspiron looks and feels so nice, especially for the price. It makes a strong standing in its class.

The speakers output a clear, distortion-free sound that doesn't fall to pieces in the mids and lows,

"For full-page or scrolling websites, the 15-inch screen in tablet mode became indispensable"

would cause the screen to pump up the brightness suddenly, only to drop it back down again a second later. It was too jarring to be useful.

In the bag

The Inspiron 15 is impressive when it comes to storage with a 256GB solid-state drive (SSD). There are also optional configurations with hard drives available in 500GB or 1TB. However, those will add about a tenth of a pound to the Inspiron's already heavy weight.

The Inspiron 15 performs well in everyday tasks. Web surfing, movie viewing and streaming from Xbox One work nicely. The i5 processor is capable enough to handle

something you might not expect out of a mid-range laptop. Watching movies on the Inspiron is a treat, given its wide, vibrant display, and it's good for in-car entertainment on road trips.

But don't bother trying to use the Inspiron 15 outside. Its reflective screen made it impossible to see anything, even on a slightly overcast day at maximum brightness.

Final verdict

The laptop is sturdy enough that you'll never feel like you need to hold it in a special way to keep it from being damaged, but opening it does require both hands and a firm grip. Its weight and size mean tablet mode can be difficult to

achieve one-handed without propping it up on something.

The build and screen quality are fantastic and make the Inspiron look like a higher-end computer when open. The keyboard is wonderful, with solid keys and an intelligent backlighting system. For everyday use, it's adequately powered and the SSD option makes it feel nice and peppy from startup to file searching. In fact, it feels like a laptop first. The extra screen space is welcome in tablet mode, but it's too big for your lap.

This Inspiron is a fine machine that would make a great laptop for professionals or students looking for a versatile device. ■

A capable 2-in-1 notebook that definitely works better as a laptop than as a tablet.

 **Windows**
Help & Advice
Verdict





Sony MP-CL1 £229 | \$349 www.sony.com

The smartphone-sized projector that packs a lot of punch

Sony's latest entry into the projector space is here, and it comes in a wonderfully tiny package. The MP-CL1 is Sony's first pico projector, offering an extremely portable projection solution for users on the go.

If you're always on the road, the MP-CL1 combines a number of features that make it a particularly attractive option for impromptu presentations.

Especially as it's only 210 grams.

But despite its small size, the MP-CL1 still manages to pack in handy features such as Wi-Fi connectivity and laser projection with autofocus. The only place where the MP-CL1 appears to be lacking in comparison is when it comes to its weedy lumen count of just 32.

On paper, the MC-PL1 looks like a great contender in the portable projector space, but we'll now take a closer look at its performance, look and feel.

The projector comes packaged in a fairly nondescript black, book-like box simply emblazoned with the Sony logo up front. The thick, smooth stock combined with a magnetic hinge makes for a premium feel that rivals Apple's attention to packaging detail.

And that premium feel carries over to the projector itself. The chassis comprises mainly matte black aluminum, with the only plastic appearing in the front and back of the device. The construction feels sturdy, with the only point of contention being those two plastic pieces, which have the potential to be trouble if the projector is dropped.

The top of the MP-CL1 is adorned only with a Sony logo at the back, along with power and battery indicators at the front. The right side of the projector is made up of smooth, unbroken aluminum, while the left side features one USB port, a 3.5mm audio jack, a mini HDMI

port, a micro USB charging port, and buttons for power and moving around menus.

On the front of the MP-CL1, you'll find another Sony logo, along with the recessed projector lens. Moving to the bottom, you'll find the speaker grille.

It's the little things

And now for the real draw of this gadget – its size. Upon first look, it would be easy to mistake the projector for a slightly overgrown smartphone. The MP-CL1 measures in at a very pocketable 77 x 149.5 x 13mm. It features a laser projection system that is rated at just 32 lumens and projects in a rather odd native resolution of 1920 x 720. Although the MP-CL1 won't win any awards for its brightness, the laser projection system can make for a sharper image with no need for manual focus controls.

It also sports a contrast ratio of 80,000:1, a 3000mAh battery rated

KEY FEATURES

Sony MP-CL1 projector

Projection system Laser
Resolution 1920 x 720
Brightness 32 Lumens
Contrast ratio 80,000:1
Projection size Up to 120"
Video inputs Mini HDMI, USB
Audio outputs 3.5mm jack
Dimensions 3.0 x 5.9 x 0.51 inches



at two hours, and the ability to mirror a smartphone or tablet over Wi-Fi. Along with an HDMI connection that is MHL compatible, this means you can connect practically any other HDMI device for streaming and mirroring over a hardwired connection.

What a performance

It may be a bit surprising considering its small form factor, but the MP-CL1 sports some impressive image quality. Upon booting the projector up for the

mirroring. HDMI performed as you'd expect, properly handling anything we threw at it. Similarly, display mirroring over Wi-Fi was as simple as casting to the MP-CL1's ad-hoc network from a compatible device. You can project documents, videos, and more from your device – essentially using your smartphone as a presentation clicker.

Speak up

Although the MP-CL1 performs exceptionally well when it comes to picture quality and performance,

“It may be surprising considering its small form factor, but it sports some impressive image quality”

first time, colours were fairly poppy, but we found the picture to be a tad warmer than we'd have liked. The colours weren't far off, and it's mostly a subjective matter, but a quick jaunt to the settings menu allowed for a bit of tinkering.

One nice feature of the MP-CL1's laser projection system is its autofocus. Often, a frustrating aspect of setting up a projector is dialing in the proper focus settings so text and images pop. With the MP-CL1, there's no need for a focus control, and the projector kept everything in proper focus no matter how far we moved it from the projection surface.

The MP-CL1 sports two main connectivity options: mini HDMI and Wi-Fi for wireless display

one particular pain point is its speaker. It's definitely understandable given the projector's small stature, but sound quality and volume out of the single speaker on the bottom of the device leaves a lot to be desired. The 3.5mm headphone jack will get a lot of play with headphones or external speakers.

Sony estimates the MP-CL1 will fetch around two hours of continuous projecting time. We found this to be about right, with a couple of tests involving streaming video and device mirroring coming in around the two-hour mark.

The Sony MP-CL1 has a lot to offer in a package that's not much bigger than your average phablet. Yes, it has some major flaws, but

we think they're worth the tradeoff for its sheer portability.

Final verdict

Due to its diminutive stature, the Sony MP-CL1 is perfect for anyone giving presentations on the go. You can simply slide it into your pocket and walk out the door – no bag necessary. Add in a premium feel and attractive design, and this projector really gives it some and may earn you some compliments at your next presentation.

Connectivity is limited to mini HDMI and wireless display mirroring, but that seems like a perfect tradeoff for extreme mobility. The included mini HDMI to HDMI dongle eliminates the need to purchase any additional accessories, and display mirroring allows you to simply connect your smartphone and go.

But, the extreme portability of the MP-CL1 doesn't come without its drawbacks as you still need an HDMI cable if you don't have a device compatible with the wireless display mirroring.

Sony's MP-CL1 offers great value for those looking for an extremely portable projector. Between its sharp, laser-projected picture, wireless connectivity and price, the MP-CL1 seemingly beats out similar small form factor projectors in its price range. As long as you're willing to acknowledge the MP-CL1 isn't meant to compete with the big kids in the projector space, its few shortcomings are easy to look past, especially when considering its portability.

The Sony MP-CL1 provides a sharp, clear picture in an extremely pocketable form factor.

 **Windows**
Help & Advice
Verdict





HP Pavilion Mini

£250 | \$269 www.hp.com

Is this the Windows-toting answer to a Mac Mini?

The market for small-footprint PCs has grown considerably and now offers a wide range of options. The HP Pavilion Mini is one of the latest small, quiet and energy-efficient desktops around. It's also one of the nicest-looking mini PCs we've seen since the Mac Mini.

Our review model came with an impressive 1TB of storage space (500GB is also available), a 1.9GHz Intel Core i3 processor and 4GB of RAM (which can be upgraded to 16GB if so desired). A faster i5 model is also available, as is a lower-priced option with a less capable Pentium 3558U processor and smaller 500GB hard drive.

Although the graphics may not be up to the task of heavy-duty video-editing or gaming, the Pavilion Mini offers plenty of connectivity for such a small package, making it an attractive proposition for light users at home or in the office.

Weighing only a little over 660g and with a diminutive footprint of 144mm x 144mm x 52mm, if you didn't know any better you could easily confuse the Pavilion Mini for an external hard drive or Wi-Fi router.

The design favours the combination of shiny white and semi-translucent plastics over utilitarian aluminium bodies you'll find on many other Mac clones. With miniature proportions and not a square corner in sight, the Pavilion Mini is a cute little machine that would grace even the coolest of workspaces.

Up front there are twin USB 3.0 sockets alongside the power button, while on the right there's a handy SD card slot for easy photo access. On the rear there are two more USB 3.0 ports alongside a HDMI, DisplayPort, RJ45 Network, 3.5mm combined headphone/microphone and DC power sockets.

The underside is covered in a rubber pad which stops the Pavilion Mini sliding around, which can be removed to enable access to the screws you'll need to undo in order to access the internals. Our model had the capable 1.9GHz i3-4025U processor rather than the bog-standard Pentium 3558U some models are stuck with.

A little bit more

Alongside the base model and the model we reviewed, HP also offers a nippier Mini in the form of an i5-5200U coupled with 8GB of RAM, rather than the 4GB in our model.

Depending on where you purchase the Pavilion Mini from, you may find a HP-branded keyboard and mouse thrown in, although it's a pretty cheap wireless combo that doesn't exactly match the Pavilion Mini's Apple-esque aesthetics.



KEY FEATURES

HP Pavilion Mini

Operating system 64-bit Windows 8 (upgradable to Windows 10)
RAM 4GB 1,600MHz DDR3 SDRAM
Processor 1.9GHz Intel Core i3-4025U
Storage 1TB 5,400rpm HDD
RAM 4GB 1,600MHz DDR3 SDRAM
Graphics Intel HD Graphics 5500
Ports 4 x USB 3.0, HDMI, DisplayPort, headphone/microphone jack, SD Card
Connectivity Bluetooth 4.0, 802.11n Wi-Fi, Gigabit Ethernet
Size 144mm x 144mm x 52mm
Optical drive N/A

The Pavilion Mini comes loaded with Windows 8.1, and can easily be upgraded to Windows 10. While Windows 8 may not have been everyone's operating system of choice, the second iteration of Microsoft's outgoing OS copes well on lower-end configurations such as this, even if it generally feels like it's more suited to touchscreen interactions.

HP has never been one for offering its PCs with a barebones Windows install, and an almost obese range of applications are pre-installed, many of which you'll likely want to uninstall straight away. McAfee's suite is the

is becoming an increasingly tough one for any one brand to dominate. Looks, price and performance vary wildly, and HP caters for a range of price and performance requirements with the Pavilion Mini, while also rivalling Apple products for looks, even if it's of plastic construction rather than Cupertino's trademark sleek aluminium.

The Pavilion Mini is a compact package that looks the part, and could happily find itself either at home fulfilling the job as a media portal or homework PC, or in the office, crunching through office documents with ease.

"A compact package that looks the part and could happily find itself either at home or in the office"

antivirus of choice (though it is just a trial), while a selection of CyberLink media applications offer photo and video playback and light editing.

Keeping it casual

A large number of casual games are also ready to play from WildTangent, although you won't find any triple-A titles here. The best of the bunch is probably Plants vs Zombies, although many may consider even this a waste of valuable storage space.

Other Windows 8 apps such as TripAdvisor, The Weather Channel, Evernote and others are frankly bloatware.

With an increasing selection of small form factor PCs, this market

HP has spread itself widely with the range of specifications on offer, with a £249.99 starting point seeming pretty competitive in light of the competition from Acer and Apple. Compared to some competitors, the variety of ports and plentiful USB connections is a pleasant surprise for such a small form factor.

HP has crammed an awful lot into this compact package, and despite the multiple ports on offer upgrade options are very limited. The only component you could consider upgrading is the RAM, and doing this requires exposing the delicately stacked innards.

The bundled selection of software was thoroughly uninspiring. We would have

hoped for more apps that play to the potential qualities of a miniature PC as a home streaming hub or cloud computing companion, rather than the numerous awful games.

The final verdict

If you're looking for a mini computer to look natty in the office, sit surreptitiously under your TV or meet the compact requirements of a kid's homework needs, then the HP Pavilion Mini is a smart contender.

While the base specification may not meet the requirements of most semi-serious gamers or the demands of more intensive tasks, the higher-end model more than meets the needs of those looking for a home entertainment computer, and it's priced favourably against others.

The mid-range specification of the model we reviewed compares favourably against similarly priced but less powerful competitors. The good looks also make it a smart Windows alternative to the Mac Mini. ■

It won't tear through intensive tasks, but the price, specs and style make it an attractive option.

 **Windows**
Help & Advice
Verdict





Plantronics BackBeat Sense

£127 | \$196 www.plantronics.com

BackBeat, the word is on the street that Sense headphones are worth a shout

Plantronics isn't a manufacturer you would normally associate with headphones. The brand made its name in the Bluetooth portable headset market and making the jump from business-centric devices to a consumer market where, increasingly, design is as important as sound quality, is a tough ask.

This is Plantronics second stab at over-ear headphones. The first was 2014's Plantronics BackBeat Pro. While sound quality was exceptional, the headphones were bulky and heavy, really made for home or office use – and this meant they were pricey, too.

Seeing the light

All of these niggles have been rectified in its latest headphones, the superb Plantronics BackBeat Sense. These wireless headphones not only look lovely, they are some of the lightest cans we've ever tested – weighing just 141g. They

are seriously light, which means you can wear them pretty much all day without any discomfort.

They come with extra-comfortable padding. Super-soft leatherette material sits on the stainless steel headband and covers the memory-foam ear pads. They feel and look great, don't warm up your ears like some 'phones and there's definitely no pinching to be felt. There's also a nice design flourish in the ear pads – each one's sound holes have been shaped in either an L or an R to denote which way to wear the headphones.

A pair of sturdy plastic arms lead down to the circular controls on both the left and the right of the devices. The design of the controls will be familiar to anyone who has used a pair of Philips Fidelio headphones – everything is well laid out and easy to use.

On the back of the left ear cup, there's a rubber clickable button with Play/Pause functionality in the

middle and skip left and right along the sides. The volume rocker is on the left-hand side and there's a nub on the top you flick forward and back to adjust volume.

What a carry on

The right ear cup houses a power button and the ability to take or cancel calls. Underneath is a 3.5mm jack for those that want to be tethered and a microUSB slot for charging. In the box you get a really nice carry case and a microUSB lead for charging the headphones, as well as some cable – in case you run out of battery.

The BackBeat Sense are wireless, which means you can attach them to a mobile device through Bluetooth – and pairing is simple. You can have two things attached simultaneously. The headphones use Bluetooth v4.0 and just to show off its prowess in this area, Plantronics's signal reaches up to 330 metres – 10x the normal range.

KEY FEATURES

Plantronics BackBeat Sense

Supplier www.plantronics.com
Bluetooth Profiles Bluetooth v4.0 + EDR, A2DP, AVRCP, HFP 1.6 wideband, HSP 1.2

Battery Power Up to 18 hours wireless streaming, 21 days standby time, 180 days in DeepSleep mode*, up to 18 hours wireless streaming, 21 days standby time, 180 days in DeepSleep mode*

Battery Type Rechargeable, non-replaceable lithium-ion

Charge Time Up to 2.5 hours

Noise-cancellation Passive noise blocking, digital signal processing (DSP) and dual microphones

Voice Alerts Spoken alerts in 14 language options

Wireless Range Up to 100 metres/330 feet from phone or tablet with Class 1 Bluetooth

Multi-Point Simultaneously connect two Bluetooth devices (2H2S)

Weight: 141g



Given that Plantronics is well known for being the makers of the mic that Neil Armstrong spoke his famous 'One small step' speech into, we decided to listen to Public Service Broadcasting's *The Race For Space*. The track *Go!* really tested the BackBeat Sense. The bass offered up a crisp rumble, while the mid tones never sounded muddled.

The songs that sound best are those that warrant a clean sound

clear, but then the company thrives in this area already.

There were a couple of niggles, though. While sound clarity was superb, these aren't as noise cancelling as their bedfellows. Wearing them on the ever-loud London commute – which for me is a walk, a bus, a train, a bus, a walk – outside noise was only really cut to about 50 per cent. The cans just didn't do enough to drown out the

hours and we managed to squeeze around that per 2.5-hour charge. For some reason, the battery icon for the device, on our LG G4, never looked much more than half full, though, which irked. But you can hard-press an ear cup for a battery status update, via LED lights.

The final verdict

Plantronics isn't a big name in headphones, but it should be. The BackBeat Sense design is sleek, offering a nice lack of bulkiness. They are among the most comfortable headphones we've worn and the lightest of their type. They're simple to setup and while sound isn't perfect, for the price it's expansive and loud.

If only Plantronics could do something about the audible sound you hear when walking, it would have an unbeatable range. For now, it's a fantastic, noticeably loud, step in the right direction.

A great-looking, lightweight over-ear Bluetooth offering – if only the sound was better.

"It feels and looks great, doesn't warm up your ears like some 'phones and there's no pinching felt"

and aren't too bass driven. Mercury Rev's *The Light In You* sounded lush with great dynamic range, but some bass-heavy Kendrick Lamar didn't have the bite we were expecting. The sound is well-rounded, however, and it's nice to hear over-ear headphones not tuned primarily to drive bass.

Volume was decent too, sounding much louder than many Bluetooth headphones we've tried – this has always been a bugbear, but the BackBeat Sense perform admirably. Some of this can be attributed to the addition of the aptX codec, with which the BackBeat Sense are compatible. It also makes sense that the Sense range acts as Bluetooth headset too. The calls we took were really

man apologising to his wife about forgetting her mother's birthday.

On the flip side, noise leakage is minimal. Colleagues next to you won't know you're listening to Shania Twain, even on high volume. And they won't hear Shania when you take them off either, as the 'phones automatically stop playing when removed. And re-start when you raise them to your ears.

The biggest issue we had was when walking with them on. Because they are so light and the leatherette band acts as suspension for the headphones when worn, they creak and offer up a slight pounding sound when your feet hit the pavement.

Battery life was impressive throughout. Plantronics quotes 18

 **Windows**
Help & Advice
Verdict



HIGH-RES AUDIO PLAYERS

Blast high-res tracks on your travels with these pocket-sized players that take sound quality to sparkling new heights

Words: Danny Phillips

Slowly but surely, high-resolution audio is shaking up the music industry, giving us the chance to hear our treasured tunes just as the artists intended. With high-res, detail is clearer, vocals are more life-like and bass is, er, bassier.

With support for high-res formats such as FLAC, ALAC, WAV, AIFF and DSD, these pocket players pipe better-than-CD-quality tracks into your ears – up to 192kHz/24-bit in most cases – and throw in other goodies such as Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and top-notch audio components that tease out the extra sonic depth and detail.

To experience high-res audio to the fullest, you need a pair of high-quality headphones that can reveal the subtleties of the music. We tested these players using OPPO's sublime PM-3s (£350, oppodigital.com).



1 Sony NWZ-A15

£170 sony.co.uk

Sony's entry-level player isn't quite the cheapest here, but the lightweight build and physical menu buttons make it feel that way. No Wi-Fi means no streaming or apps, but there is Bluetooth aptX, NFC, FM radio and 16GB of built-in memory (microSD cards are supported). Its diddy size slips nicely into the pocket, and the 2.2-inch screen is easy to read. The Sony plays *Lose Yourself To Dance* by Daft Punk with deep, rumbling bass and glittering detail, but it lacks the dynamism of better rivals. On the plus side, Sony's claimed 30-hour battery life is remarkable.



2 Acoustic Research AR-M2

£900 acoustic-research.com

The metal M2 is a well-built player, but the volume wheel is too easy to turn by mistake. The basic Android OS (4.3) looks great on the five-inch screen, while Wi-Fi and a web browser are a bonus. The 64GB of built-in storage can be expanded with a microSD card, and it plays every high-res format up to 192kHz/24-bit, including niche stuff like DSD and DXD. Leave the Sound Effects menu alone and sound quality is astonishing, offering greater bass punch, but the nine-hour battery life isn't as long as some.



3 Cowon Plenue M

£540 cowonglobal.com

The Plenue M is a scaled-down version of Cowon's pricier Plenue 1, but it remains beautifully built and stuffed with high-end features. There's a Burr-Brown DAC, noise-reduction tech and support for all the high-res formats, like FLAC, ALAC, DSD and even DXD. Battery life is 11 hours, and there's 64GB of built-in storage (expandable with a microSD card), but there's no wireless. The 3.7-inch touchscreen is sharp, but top of the bill is its performance – through our cans, the Cowon makes high-res tracks sound weighty, dynamic and staggeringly detailed.





4 Astell&Kern AK120 II

£1,499 astellnkern.com

With its precision-engineered bodywork and suave styling, this is the player Bond would choose. The sharp 3.3-inch touchscreen makes navigation a cinch. On-board memory is the most capacious here (128GB), and this can be doubled with a microSD card. It also offers balanced headphone outputs and dual DACs, and plays any high-res format up to 192kHz/24-bit. There's Bluetooth and Wi-Fi, but it only connects to A&K's PC software. Sound quality is amazing, with pristine detail and full-bodied bass.



5 Fiio X3 (2nd Generation)

£159 fiio.net/en

Fiio's revamped X3 is the most affordable player here, but you wouldn't know it from the robust aluminium chassis and feature list. A full-colour interface greets you on the two-inch screen, but the jittery jog wheel betrays the budget price. Features are terrific for the money, including DSD decoding, 11-hour battery, a Cirrus Logic DAC and dual crystal oscillators, but there's no built-in storage. The price doesn't impact on sound quality – you hear every detail, while the bass is punchy.



6 PonoPlayer

£260 ponomusic.com

The brainchild of high-res champion Neil Young, the PonoPlayer stands out from the crowd. Kudos for the quirky pyramid design and tactile rubber finish, but it's too chunky to fit comfortably in the pocket. Like the other players, it supports all the high-res formats and offers 64GB of internal storage, expandable by microSD, while the two-inch touchscreen is low-res but responsive. In action, it handles the high-res version of Young's *Heart Of Gold* with abundant detail and dynamics (as you'd expect!), but the quoted eight-hour battery life is disappointing.



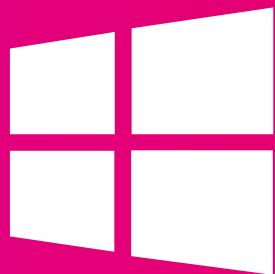
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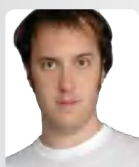


Welcome to...

Windows 10

► WINDOWS 10 TIPS ► INSTALLATION ADVICE ► GET GOING WITH A NEW PC

Welcome



Whether you've just installed Windows 10, or you're still wondering if it's

worth the upgrade, then you've come to the right place. Windows 10 can be a leap into the unknown for some people, and we're here to give you the confidence to take the initial steps.

In this section, you'll find advice on how to upgrade to Windows 10, as well as a short tutorial showing how it works and what you need to do first.

And don't forget to let us know how you're getting on! Email us on windowsmagazine@futurenet.com.

Matt Hanson
Associate Editor
www.facebook.com/windowsmag

Featuring...

92 Installing Windows 10 is easy to do – read our no-nonsense guide for all the tips and advice you need

94 With your operating system installed, we show you how to get started with the new features



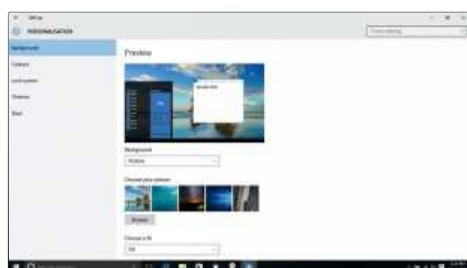
**TURN TO
PAGE 12
FOR MORE
WINDOWS 10
HELP**

Windows 10 tip of the month

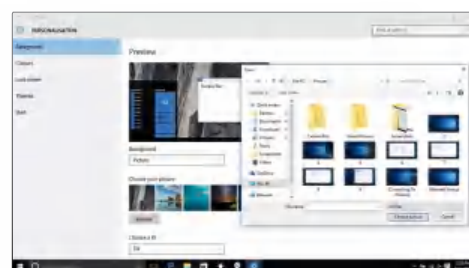
Change your background picture

Update your background picture

The default Windows 10 background picture is a little, shall we say, on the dark side? You can brighten things up by choosing one of the other default backgrounds, or you're free to use any picture you like, including one of your own photos. You'll find the Personalisation options to do all this in the Settings app, which is accessible from the Start menu. Here's how to update your background.



FIND THE SETTINGS From the Start menu choose Settings, then Personalisation, then Background



BRIGHTEN UP Choose a different background picture or click Browse to use your own photo

Installing WINDOWS 10

Bring your PC up to date with the latest version of Windows 10
– it could be the last time you'll ever upgrade...

Windows 10 offers many new features and improvements from previous versions. Features include Cortana and the Edge web browser, as well as Windows-standard security tools, such as secure boot and Windows Defender. If you're currently using Windows 7 Starter, Home Basic or Home Premium, or the standard Windows 8.1, this is the version you'll get as part of your free upgrade.

Windows 10 Pro is designed for more advanced operation, and includes a few more features, including the ability to host a Remote Desktop session, additional data security with BitLocker and the Encrypted File System (EFS),

additional networking components, and Hyper-V, which allows the creation of virtual machines.

Windows 10 is also making its way to mobile devices with the Mobile and Mobile Enterprise editions, which will replace Windows Phone 8.

Get installing

Installing, as you'll find out, is reasonably straightforward. Upgrading from within Windows is even easier. In our testing, we lost no files or installed programs, although you may see a few default Windows apps disappearing –

Windows 7's Solitaire and Hearts, for example, will not transfer because Windows 10 has its own versions.

Windows 10 maintains a high level of compatibility with previous versions, and we're yet to encounter any software that doesn't work as it did on the Windows 8.1 desktop.

If you're eligible for the free upgrade – that is, if you're running a licensed copy of Windows 8, 8.1 or 7 with at least Service Pack 1 installed – you'll see a Windows logo in the taskbar at the bottom-right corner of your desktop. Click to get Windows 10 for free.

But there's more than one way to upgrade, and several things to bear in mind when

you do so. Here we cover everything you need to know!

Back up first

While it's unlikely anything will go wrong, a new install is a good excuse for a backup! Safe data should be stored in its original location, with copies in two other different locations. You will need to use an external drive and online cloud storage. Most free services offer a limited amount of space, so only place your most critical files here. Services such as Carbonite or CrashPlan, which charge a subscription fee, offer more options, and do the hard work for you.

The key location to have backed up is your personal folder, which will sit within the Users folder on your main drive. This includes your libraries – Documents, Photos

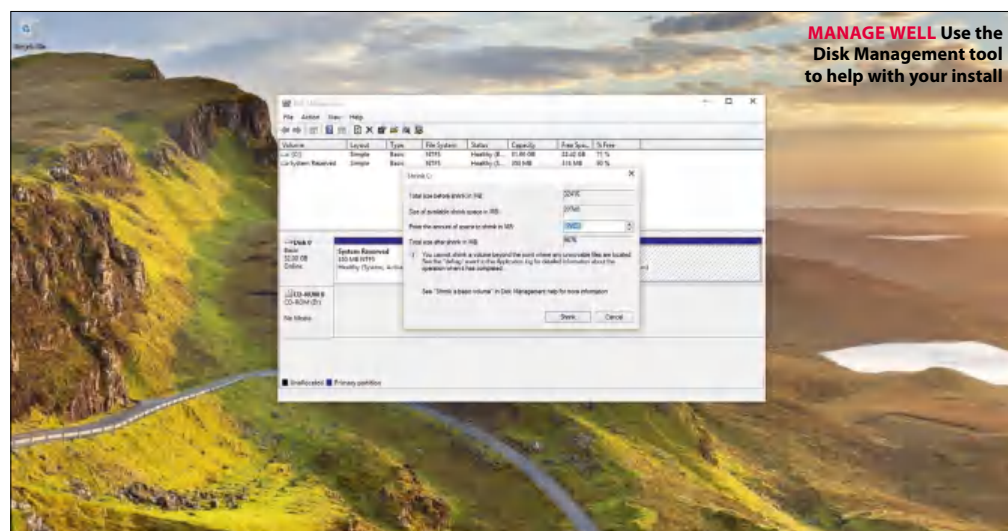


and the like – and your Windows desktop. But do be warned it won't cover absolutely everything safely.

There's a small chance you're very organised, and you know where every file of a given type resides on your hard drive. There's a larger chance everything is scattered in separate places, so you'll need to dig everything up. Use Windows' search facility to find what you're looking for; open up Computer in an Explorer window and use the search bar at the top to search for, for example, '*.jpg' to find all of your photos, or '*.mp3' for your music. Select the files from your searches and copy them to your external drive and, if you have space, to your chosen cloud service.

Time to upgrade

To upgrade to Windows 10, just click the icon in your System Tray and proceed. Or, you might want to do clean install. If you have a copy of Windows 10 on DVD, put it in your optical drive, restart your machine, and it'll boot from the disc. If it doesn't, you'll need to change a setting in your computer's BIOS/UEFI to put the optical drive first in the boot order. We can't be specific about exactly what setting to change and how, given the wide variety of BIOS and UEFI systems out there, but watch out for a message displayed on your PC's screen at boot time – you might see a window in which to hit an allotted key, usually [F2] or [Del]. If you know the model of your PC, check the manufacturer's website for more instructions. The process is also true if



you've transferred an ISO image to USB for installation; while there are more steps to take, as long as your install media is set to boot first, you'll be fine. You'll need to ensure you have your drive inserted into a port before you boot to BIOS in order to set this up. Once you're running the installer, follow the instructions. The Windows 10 install process is more simple and foolproof than before, and if you're careful not to let it overwrite a partition you're using, you'll likely have no problem.

But wait! Hold fire if you're looking to dual boot Windows 10 with 7 or 8.1; before you install, unless you happen to have a spare partition, you'll need to use the Disk Management tool within your old OS to resize your primary partition and separate off space for Windows 10 to install into.

But wait... again! Before you resize your partition, make sure your files are arranged by defragmenting it, leaving space

at the end to be reallocated. Right click your primary drive in Windows Explorer, select 'Properties', open the Tools tab, and click 'Defragment now'. Now click Defragment Disk to start the process. Launch the Disk Management tool by opening the run dialog with [Windows]+[R] then typing diskmgmt.msc. The interface shows the partitions that exist on your machine – you'll probably have at least two, a small recovery partition and a much larger main partition, and it's the latter we're interested in. Check in the volumes list at the top of the window that your chosen partition has enough free space (at least 16GB for 32-bit Windows 10 and 20GB for 64-bit, allocating more if you can). If you're short on space, clear some files before continuing. Right click your target drive in the Disk Management tool and select 'Shrink Volume', then input the amount of space you're looking to claw back. Be aware that the tool is looking for this in MB rather than GB, so add three zeroes to the end of your intended space in GB. Click 'OK' and the tool will go to work, and you'll be left with an area on your drive labelled 'unallocated space'. We now need to turn this into a partition. Right click it, select 'new simple volume', and click 'Next'. You can give this new partition any letter you like. Keep clicking 'Next' until you see the formatting options. Make sure you choose 'NTFS' as the file system, and label your drive before formatting the space.

Windows 10 keyboard shortcuts

- [Alt]+[Tab]**
Switch between open apps
- [Alt]+[F4]**
Close the active item, or exit the active app
- Windows logo key+[L]**
Lock your PC or switch accounts
- Windows logo key+[D]**
Display and hide the desktop
- Windows logo key+[A]**
Open Action center
- Windows logo key+[S]**
Open search
- Windows logo key+[C]**
Open Cortana in listening mode
- Windows logo key+Tab**
Open Task view
- Windows logo key+[Ctrl]+[D]**
Add a virtual desktop
- Windows logo key+[Ctrl]+Right arrow**
Switch between virtual desktops you've created on the right
- Windows logo key+[Ctrl]+Left arrow**
Switch between virtual desktops you've created on the left
- Windows logo key+[Ctrl]+[F4]**
Close the virtual desktop you're using



BOOT UP Installing from a disc? Then you might need to visit your UEFI system

Learn how to... Get started with Windows 10



Your guide **Zak Storey** says...

"Now you've finally got Windows 10 installed, it's time to find out what it has to offer"

Now you've got Windows 10 installed, up and running, it's time to see how the new system works. There's a new Start menu for you to explore and some exciting new features. For example, when it comes to aiding productivity Windows 10 has plenty on offer. Whether it's **aero snapping** your apps to corners or asking Cortana to help you out by setting reminders, it's all there to streamline your daily computing.

The best approach is to dive right into as many of the settings as you can – personalising your operating system, desktop and programs for the tasks you perform the most.

For instance, if Cortana isn't your thing, or you prefer not to search on the desktop through Bing then you can remove that part from the taskbar at the bottom of the page. Doing this will give you more screen space, as well as a tidier desktop and leave you with more space to pin programs to. But, these are just a few ways to improve your Windows experience, read on to learn more.

Jargon buster!

► Resolution

The resolution is how many pixels occupy the screen. The higher the resolution the more dots and the clearer your images will be.

► Snapping

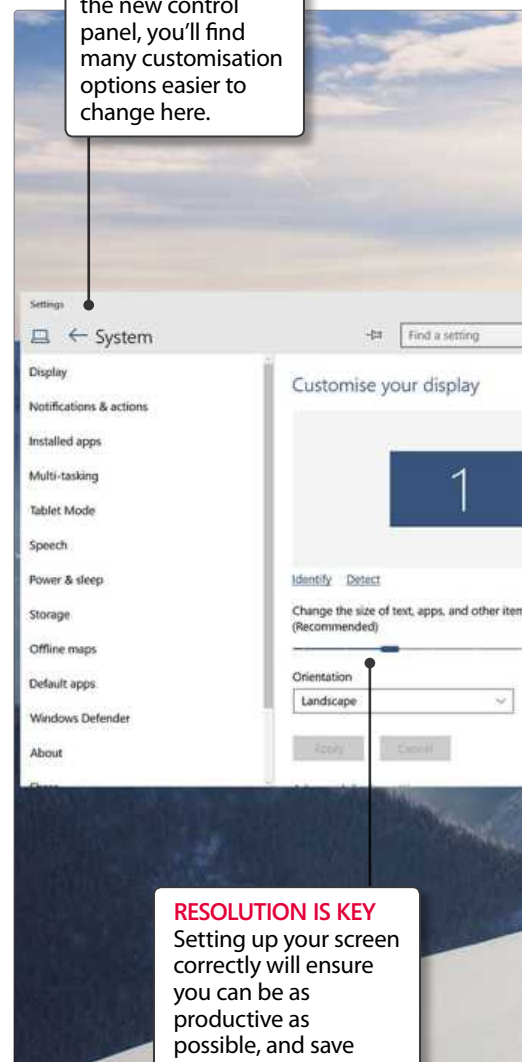
A way of arranging and resizing windows, by dragging them to the edge of your screen.

► Partition

A separate segment of your drive split off to organise and protect your files from viruses or data loss.

SETTINGS

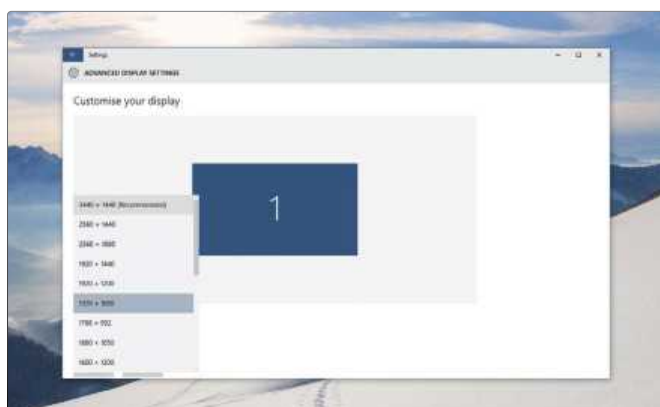
The Settings tab is the new control panel, you'll find many customisation options easier to change here.



RESOLUTION IS KEY

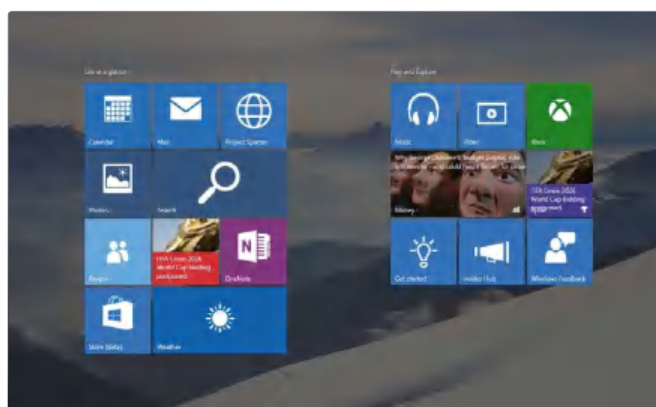
Setting up your screen correctly will ensure you can be as productive as possible, and save your eyesight as well.

Step-by-step | Get started with Windows 10



1 Set up your screen resolution

To help increase your productivity make sure your screen is running at maximum **resolution**. You'll find text and images are much clearer and easier to see. Right click on an empty area of your desktop and select 'Display Settings'. You can now select 'Advanced Display Settings' in the right-hand window. Here you'll find the Resolution drop-down menu – select the highest option.



2 Switch to Tablet mode for 2-in-1 laptops

Open the Start menu and select 'Settings'. Here you'll find some tools you can configure to make your life easier. Go to System then Tablet mode. Enabling Tablet mode will make Windows 10 act more like Windows 8 – your apps will be fully sized and your Start Menu will expand to the entire screen. Ideal for 2-in-1 laptops and touchscreen all-in-ones.

MULTI-APP VIEW

This little button makes switching between apps much easier.

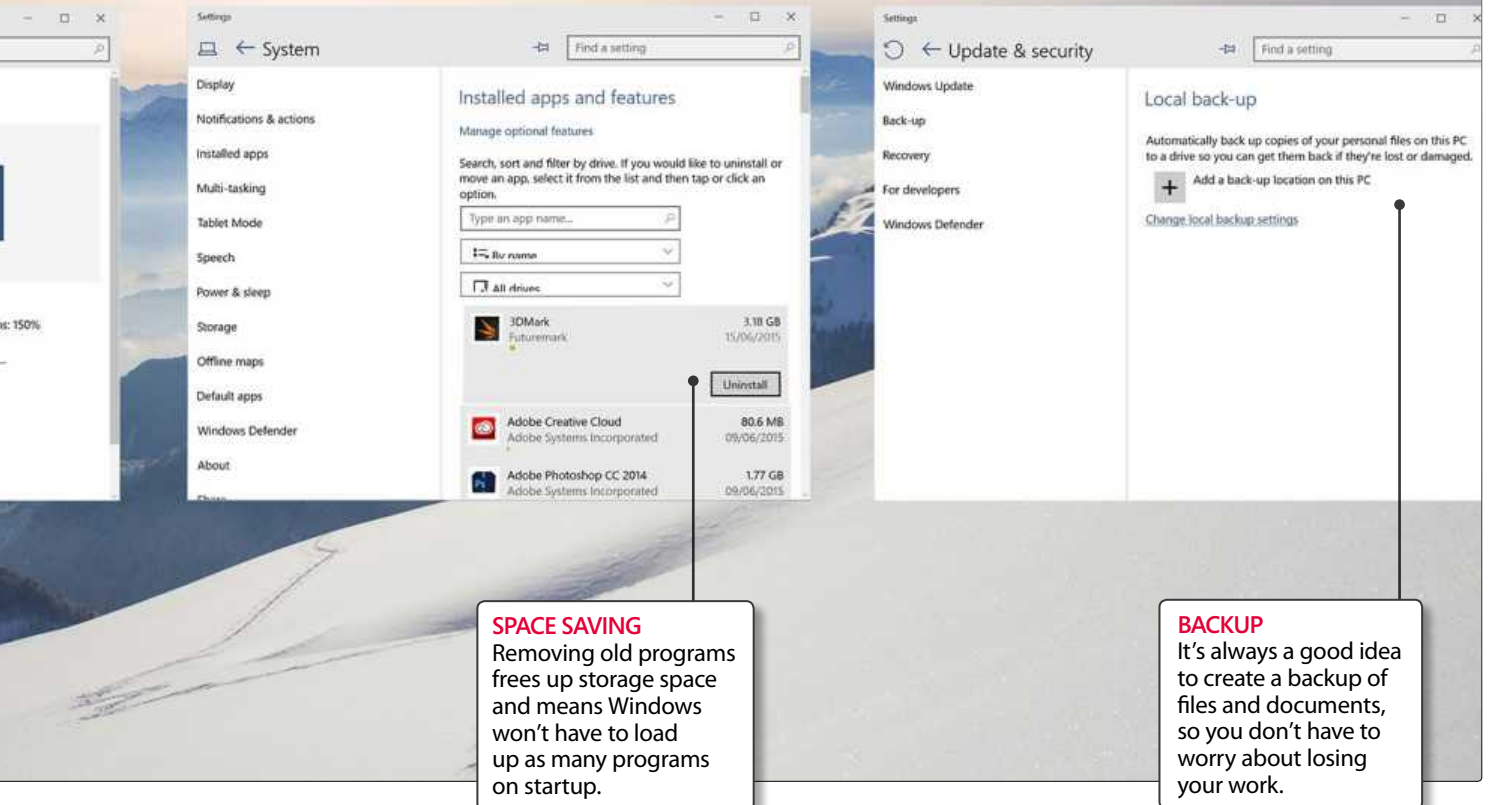


ZAK'S BEST TIP!

Explore all the menus to discover all the options on offer. We guarantee you'll find plenty of shortcuts and tricks that will soon become indispensable.

CORTANA

Your personal assistant, ask it for anything and it'll see if it can help, or just search the internet for an answer.

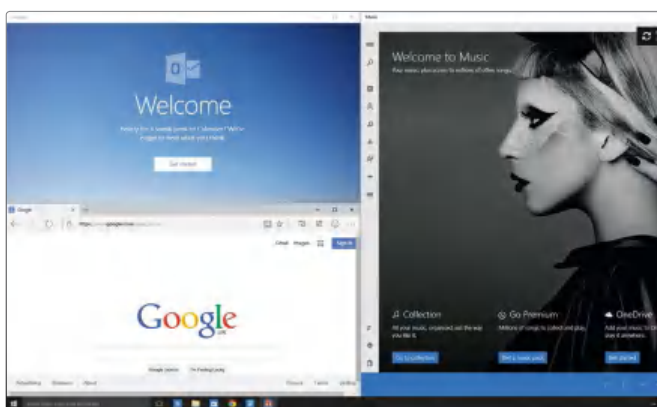


SPACE SAVING

Removing old programs frees up storage space and means Windows won't have to load up as many programs on startup.

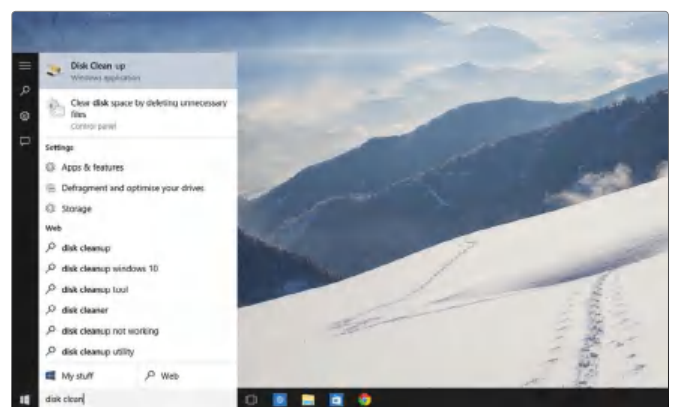
BACKUP

It's always a good idea to create a backup of files and documents, so you don't have to worry about losing your work.



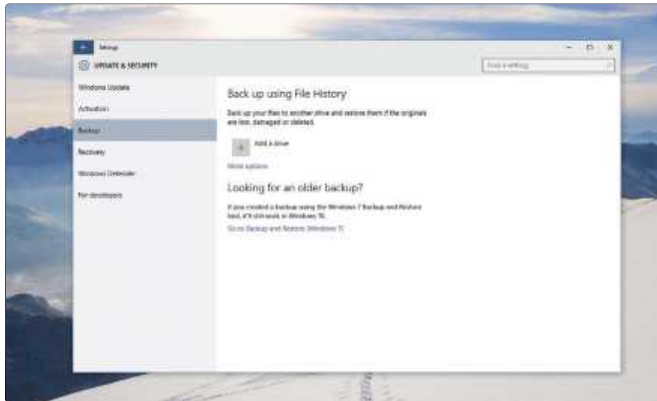
3 Aero Snap in Windows 10

Snapping programs to the sides of the screen was a feature introduced in Windows 7. In Windows 10 you can now snap applications to each corner, as well as to the sides, by left clicking and dragging the top bar into a corner. You will also see a visual representation of how much screen space the app will take up. This makes it much easier to multitask with two documents.



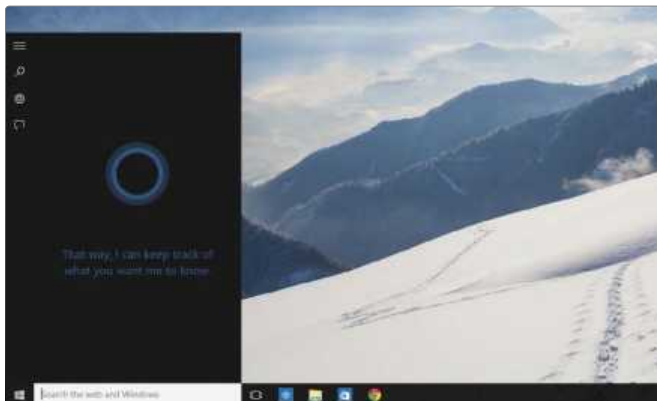
4 Uninstall programs

Uninstalling old and unused programs can be useful for freeing up storage space on your PC. You'll also notice your start-up times become speedier if you declutter. To do this, click 'Settings' in the Start Menu, select 'System' then on the left tab select 'Installed Apps'. Here you can remove apps by left-clicking them and selecting 'Uninstall'.



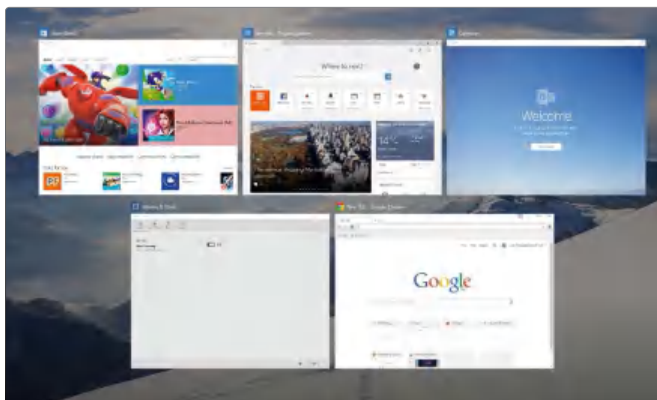
5 Create a secure backup

You'll need around 120GB of excess storage in a separate **partition** or drive to create a secure backup of your PC's OS and documents every week. Go to 'Settings' and select 'Update & Security', then click on 'Back-up' in the left-hand window. Click on the '+' button and select the partition or drive you wish to use. Once done select 'more options', then 'See advanced settings'.



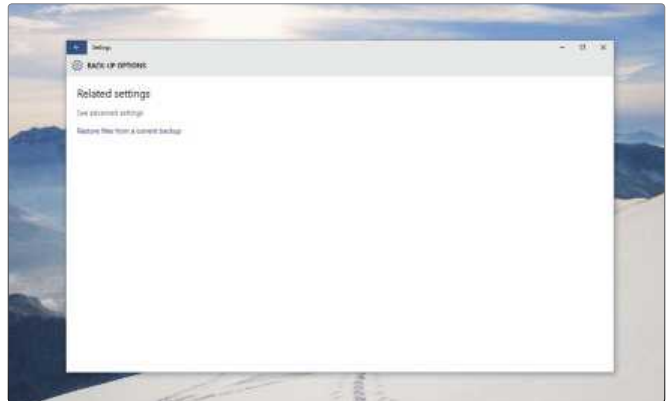
7 Cortana on call

If you're signed into your Microsoft account you can use Cortana for many things from searching the internet, to setting calendar reminders or sending emails. To get going, just say "Hey Cortana" (making sure your mic is enabled) or type **Cortana** into the search bar at the bottom left-hand of your screen. If it can't do something for you it'll search the internet for the answer.



9 Multi-App view

Another neat feature is the ability to swap between many apps at any time. Just press 'Task view', the button to the right of the search bar near the Start menu. This allows you to quickly switch between open applications (including minimised ones) without having to trawl through the icons on your task bar, making it much easier to find programs.



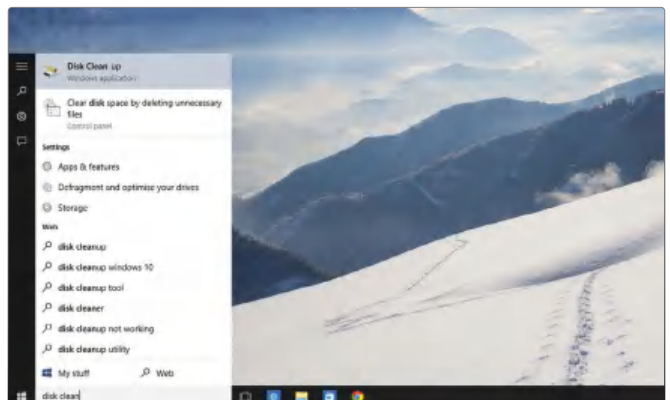
6 Finish the backup

Now click 'System Image Backup' in the bottom left-hand corner of the screen, and click 'Set up Back-up' on the right-hand side of the screen. Highlight the drive you want to use for your backup and click 'Next', then 'Let Windows Choose'. Hit 'Next' again. You can now set up the schedule for when Windows performs the backup and then press 'Save settings and run backup'.



8 Organise mail accounts into one

Keeping all email accounts in one place was a handy feature introduced in older versions of Windows 8. However, the Mail app that replaced Outlook has much more increased functionality. Click on the Mail icon in your Start window select 'Add account', select your email service and fill in the details. You can now select 'Done' and all your emails will be in one place.



10 Uninstalling the old Windows

So, it's time to bid farewell to Windows 7 or 8 on your PC! To uninstall it, click on the Start menu and type in **disk clean up**, then open the 'Disk Clean Up' application. You can now select drive (C:), press 'OK' and let Windows scan the drive. Scroll down the open window and tick 'Previous Windows Installation(s)' tab, select 'Clean up system files' and you're done. ■

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